

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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WEDNESDAY MARCH 10, 2004

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I N S I D E

See NORITA on Page 8

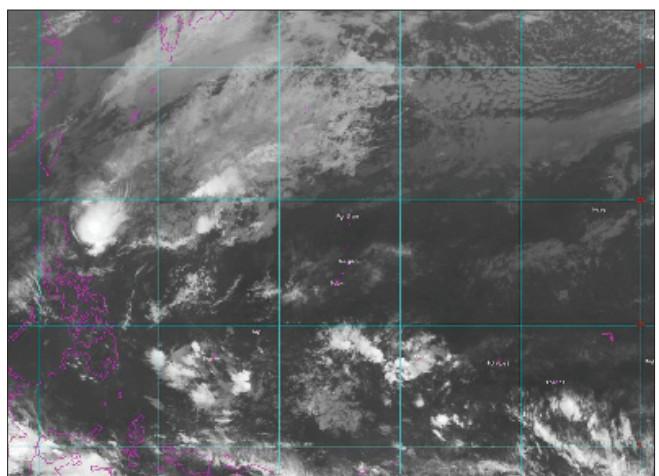
See HOUSE on Page 8

Local Milestones

SAIPANCELL
CMYK

CARS UNLIMITED

CENTURY
TRAVEL


**COMMUNITY
Briefs**
WEATHER FORECAST

PICTURE TIME: 1:00 AM., MARCH 9, 2004

Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Fresh to strong trade winds across much of Micronesia converging into lighter winds near the Equator are producing scattered showers between the Equator and 8n from 130e to 153 and between the Equator and 6n from 160e to 180. A cold front stretches from 25n161e to 20n146e and continues as a shear line to 19n130e. Low- and mid-level clouds...light rain and showers associated this feature extend up to 200 miles north of the boundary. Trade wind convergence south of the cold front/shear line is producing low clouds and showers between 12n and 18n from 132e to 150e. This area includes the Mariana Islands.


SAIPAN AND TINIAN

Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: East at 15-20 mph. Highs near 87. Lows near 76.

GUAM AND ROTA

Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: East at 15-20 mph. Highs near 87. Lows near 76.

PALAU

Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.

POHNPEI

Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.

YAP AND ULITHI

Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.

KOSRAE

Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: East at 10-15 kt.

CHUUK

Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.

MAJURO

Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.

Winds: East at 15-20 kt.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
Auckland	Sunny	71F (22C)	60F (16C)
Beijing	Sunny	65F (18C)	48F (9C)
Hong Kong	Sunny	74F (23C)	61F (16C)
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	82F (28C)	68F (20C)
London, England	Sunny	45F (7C)	30F (-1C)
Los Angeles	Sunny	79F (26C)	59F (15C)
Manila	Partly Cloudy	88F (31C)	73F (23C)
Melbourne	Sunny	75F (24C)	59F (15C)
Miami	Partly Cloudy	72F (22C)	54F (12C)
New York City	Cloudy	40F (4C)	34F (1C)
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	37F (3C)	25F (-4C)
Paris	Partly Cloudy	38F (3C)	25F (-4C)
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	53F (12C)	39F (4C)
Rome	Cloudy	49F (9C)	30F (-1C)
Salem, Oregon	Partly Cloudy	60F (16C)	40F (4C)
San Francisco	Sunny	68F (20C)	52F (11C)
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	47F (8C)	35F (2C)
Tokyo, Japan	Partly Cloudy	42F (6C)	36F (2C)
Washington, DC	Cloudy	45F (7C)	34F (1C)



The CNMI, together with the rest of the American family, will be celebrating today the 14th anniversary of the passage of the American with Disabilities Act.

BY THE NUMBERS

Population distribution

49.7 million—Number of people age 5 and over in the civilian non-institutionalized population with at least one disability, according to Census 2000; this is a ratio of nearly 1-in-5 U.S. residents, or 19 percent. These individuals fit at least one of the following descriptions: 1) they are 5 years old or older and have a sensory, physical, mental or self-care disability; 2) they are 16 years old or older and have difficulty going outside the home; or 3) they are 16-to-64 years old and have an employment disability.

By age and sex

7 percent of boys and 4 percent of girls ages 5 to 15 have disabilities.

20 percent of men and 18 percent of women ages 16 to 64 have disabilities.

43 percent of women and 40 percent of men 65 or older have disabilities.

24 percent—Percentage of West Virginia residents 5 or older who have at least one disabil-

ity, the highest rate in the nation (West Virginia also has the highest median age of any state.), followed by Kentucky, Arkansas, Mississippi and Alabama.

30 percent—Percentage of residents of Paterson, N.J., who have at least one disability. Paterson, N.J.; Miami, Fla.; and Newark, N.J., have the highest proportions of people with disabilities among places with 100,000 or more residents.

46 percent—Percentage of people with disabilities reporting more than one disability.

60 percent—Percentage of working-age men with disabilities who are employed. For women, the rate is 51 percent. Altogether, 10.4 million men and 8.2 million women with disabilities are employed.

1.9 million—Number of people ages 18 to 34 who have disabilities and are enrolled in school. They comprise 12 percent of all students in this age group. The majority of this group (1.4 million) attend college or graduate school.

Specific Disabilities

9.3 million—The number of people age 5 or older in 2000 with a sensory disability involving sight or hearing. This group accounts for 3.6 percent of the total population age 5 or over.

21.2 million—The number of people age 5 or older with a condition limiting basic physical activities, such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting or carrying. This group accounts for 8.2 percent of the total population age 5 or older.

12.4 million—The number of people age 5 or older with a physical, mental or emotional condition causing difficulty in learning, remembering or concentrating. This group accounts for 4.8 percent of the total population age 5 or older.

6.8 million—Number of people age 5 or older who have a physical, mental or emotional condition causing difficulty in dressing, bathing or getting around inside the home. This group accounts for 2.6 percent of the total population age 5 or older.

18.2 million—Number of people age 16 or older who have a condition that makes it difficult to go outside the home to shop or visit a doctor. This group accounts for 8.6 percent of people who are of this age.

21.3 million—Number of people ages 16 to 64 who have a condition that affects their ability to work at a job or business. They account for 11.9 percent of the people in this age group.

Earnings

\$28,803—Median 1999 earnings of the 12 million year-round, full-time workers who have any of the six disabilities mentioned above. By comparison, people with none of these disabilities had median earnings of \$33,970.

Serving our nation

2.4 million—Number of veterans who receive compensation for service-related disabilities. Of these vets, 440,000 served in World War II; 165,000 in Korea; 799,000 in Vietnam; and 419,000 in the Persian Gulf.

On this day in 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed into law the ADA, guaranteeing equal opportunity for people with disabilities in public accommodations, commercial

facilities, employment, transportation, state and local government services and telecommunications.

As part of the activities lined up for this week, the CNMI Council

on Developmental Disabilities will be kicking off an Accessibility Guidelines for Persons with Disabilities Training event today, from 8:45am to around 5pm.

For the first time in history of

the CNMI, Paul Beatty, an accessibility specialist from the U.S. Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board—better known as the US Access Board in Washington, D.C.—will



VERIZON 611
CMYK

It's a go for proposed Plumeria Estates



The Tottotville subdivision in Koblerville.

AGNES E. DONATO

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

The road has been paved for the construction of a new housing project similar to Tottotville subdivision in Koblerville.

The Marianas Public Lands Authority on Friday designated 128 Koblerville lots to the Northern Marianas Housing Corp. The quitclaim deeds for the properties serve as proof of NMHC's legal ownership of the properties. NMHC will use them as collateral when negotiating with banks to finance the mortgages of the homes.

MPLA chair Ana Demapan-Castro, however, attached one condition to the approval: that NMHC will prioritize all prospective first-time homeowners who have existing loan applications to purchase homes at the new subdivision.

The housing project, called "Plumeria Estates," will be located near Tottotville Subdivision in Koblerville. NMHC said a total of 128 houses will be available for sale, consisting of two-, three-, and four-bedroom units.

NMHC is now accepting loan applications from eligible residents.

Earlier, Gov. Juan N. Babauta reported that the Housing Task Force is now reviewing bid proposals from prospective developers for the construction of houses for the Plumeria Estates.

The winning developer will finance the construction of the housing project. The mortgages of the completed homes, in turn, will be used to reimburse the developer for the costs of building.

Initially, the Housing Task Force made plans to build two homestead subdivisions similar to Tottotville. Based on the earlier plan, 78 houses would be built in Koblerville and 74 more on Capitol Hill.

The task force, however, decided to concentrate the housing development in Koblerville, following a site inspection of both areas. The group found that the rugged topography of the Capitol Hill homestead lots made the area too costly for the project.

Further, the task force decided to increase the number of homestead lots in Koblerville "to make the housing development project more attractive to prospective developers," Babauta said.

Out of the 228 lots in the proposed development area next to Tottotville, only 78 homestead lots have met the permit requirements. But the increase in number of lots available for the Plumeria Estates project was made possible after the Division of Fish and Wildlife agreed to waive their concern on the adjacent homestead lots.

As a result, there are now 128 homestead lots available for the housing project.

Port Moresby clinics close while officials cruise

PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea (The National/PIR)—The urban clinics service in the National Capital District faces total shutdown because City Hall says it does not have the money to pay outstanding water bills of about K30,000 (US\$9,330) for its 12 clinics.

However, City Hall has managed to scrap together money to buy a latest model executive vehicle available in PNG, which is worth K165,000 (US\$51,315).

City water managers, Eda

Ranu, turned off the taps at three of the busiest clinics—Gerehu, Lawes Road and Badili—last Tuesday, the same day that NCDC took delivery of the latest model Nissan Cefiro from a motor dealer.

And Eda Ranu warned it would turn off the taps at the other nine clinics if City Hall does not settle its bills which amount to between K2,000 (US\$622) and K3,000 (US\$933) per clinic.

The director of the National

Capital District Urban Clinics, Sam Kove confirmed yesterday that the three of 12 NCDC-funded clinics were closed.

Kove described Gerehu, Lawes Road and Badili as the three biggest in the city and the shutdowns mean that more than 30,000 people living near each of the clinic would be affected.

"Eda Ranu decided to disconnect the water supplies to the three biggest clinics even though they (12 clinics) were all billed together, so by closing a

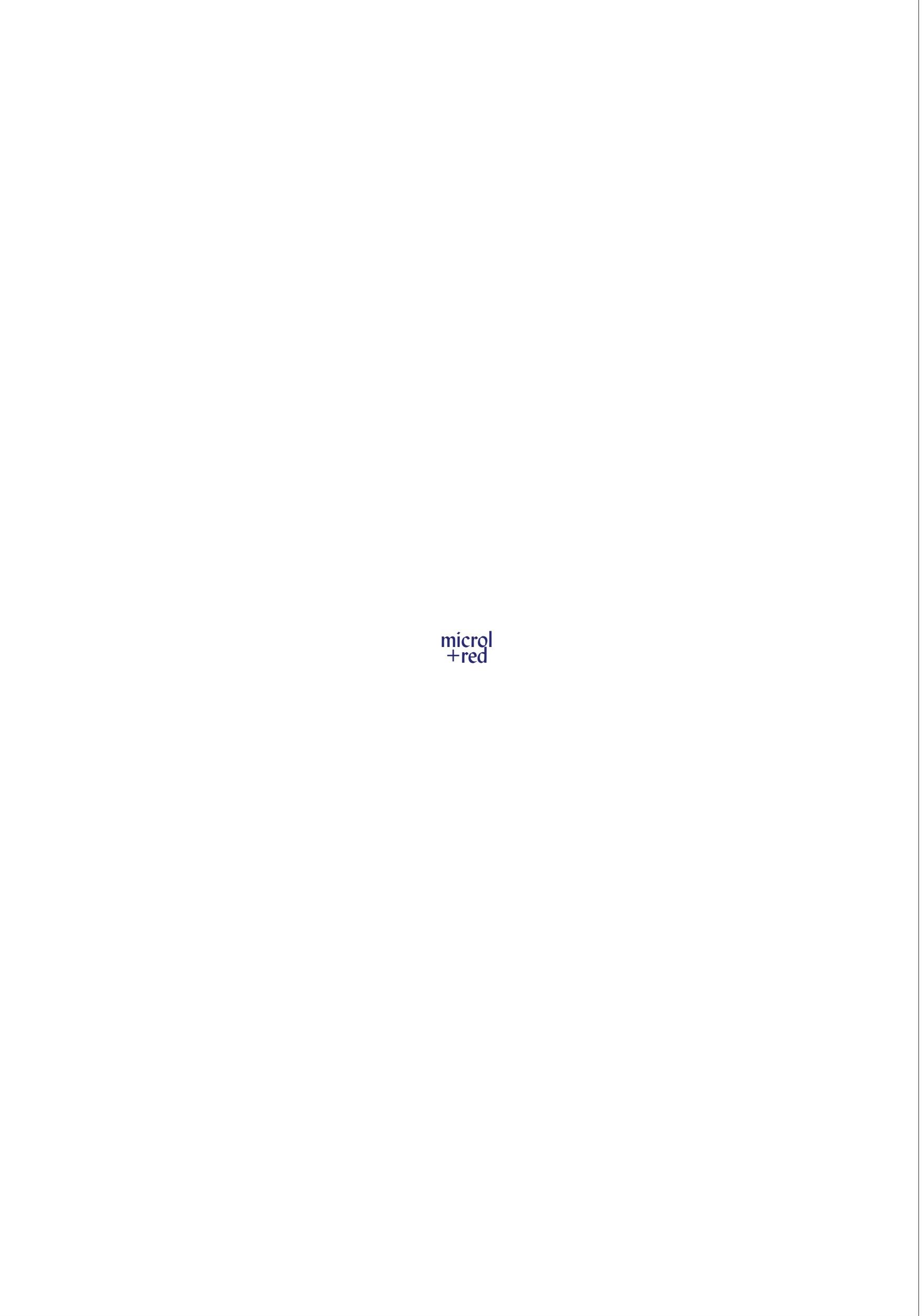
few, we pay all our bills," Kove, who is in charge of all urban clinics, said.

He said they had made arrangements for paying Eda Ranu but "the Government does not have money."

"When there is no money, there is not much we can do," he said.

But a City Hall official confirmed yesterday that it had forked out K165,000 (US\$51,315) last Tuesday for the metallic blue executive sedan, registration BBP 457, last Tuesday.

SHELL
CMYK



microl
+red

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

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AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Now it's up to the gods

The Olympic Games increasingly are defined by something other than the competition. Think politics (Mexico City 1968), boycotts (Moscow 1980), crass commercialism (Atlanta 1996) and bribery scandal (Salt Lake City 2002). The haunting question as 10,500 athletes from a record 202 countries assemble for today's opening ceremony is what memory will define the Athens Games.

Greece will spend \$1.5 billion on security—five times more than Australia spent for the last Summer Olympics, which occurred before Sept. 11, 2001. Soldiers will outnumber athletes 7 to 1 in the Olympic Village.

Jittery U.S. basketball players who on Tuesday played their final tuneup game in Turkey got a chilling reminder of the new reality when bombs exploded near their Istanbul hotel and the pregame warmup included a State Department security briefing.

U.S. corporate Olympic sponsors are keeping the locations of hospitality centers secret and, because many security-conscious Americans are opting to stay away, more Europeans (who apparently aren't as worried) are getting the freebie VIP tickets. Oddly enough, it was the desire for a muted corporate presence (after Atlanta's organizers buried the 1996 Summer Games in corporate logos) that initially prompted the International Olympic Committee to select historic Greece as the site of these Games.

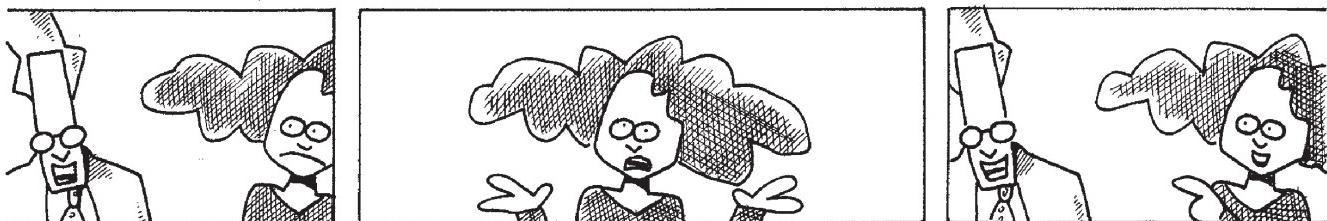
Terrorism is the darkest cloud on the Olympic horizon, but other cloudbursts threaten. The IOC gets and spends billions of dollars from television and corporate sponsorships, yet many athletes still lack adequate training facilities. The IOC tossed out its first suspected doping offender (a Kenyan boxer) two days before the opening ceremony. Times reporter David Wharton wrote Wednesday about the growing number of athletes who switch nationalities to win a place on an Olympic squad. And observers in other countries suspect that U.S. athletes will invite catcalls if they drape themselves in red, white and blue after a gold medal run, dunk or swim.

Then there is the not-so-serious. Athens is advertised as a back-to-the-basics competition, yet beach volleyball is on the agenda and a petition is circulating online to deal in poker. Olympic addicts would need more than a month to view all of the programming that NBC's networks will broadcast. Sports commentator Bob Costas has described the cartoonish Olympic mascots Athena (after the host city's namesake) and Phevos (from the Greek god of light and music) as "a genetic experiment gone horribly, ghastly wrong." And a handful of U.S. women suiting up for the Games have agreed to strip down for a men's magazine "to celebrate women and women at the Olympics." Altius, Citius, Fortius.

2004, Los Angeles Times

ACTUAL QUOTE COMIX: BUSH-CHENEY CAMPAIGN SPOKESMAN EDITION

A Bateman Drawing
©mmiv scott@bateman.com B



"Most Americans who don't have health care don't have health care by choice."^{*}

So, it's my choice that I got laid off from a decent job that provided health care, my choice that the only job I could find doesn't provide health care...

...and my choice that I can't afford health care premiums today, which are nine grand a year and rising way faster than inflation...?

Exactly!

Good, because it's also my choice to not vote for any campaign idiotic enough to hire an ignorant, insensitive doofus like you to be its spokesman.

Hurdles to becoming bookish

By NANCY SCHNOG
Special to The Washington Post

First of two parts.

On June 11, when the last school bell of the year sounded, I began my vacation from teaching high school English with serious plans to let the red ink fade from my fingertips. But my efforts to focus on exercise and garden, caring for my kids and relaxing have lately been thwarted by one of this summer's hot news stories: According to the National Endowment for the Arts, we are now, decisively, a nation of readers at risk.

The endowment's findings, though nothing we English educators haven't long suspected, bury yet another of our deepest pedagogical aspirations. Once again, we're being warned that Americans are in the process of losing a common literary heritage. Even more dangerously, our young generation is growing up devoid of cognitive skills, such as focused concentration and complex intellectual deciphering, that take root when children learn primarily from books rather than from television and computer screens.

"Who now is willing to put in the time or effort to read a real book?" *Washington Post* book critic Michael Dirda recently lamented. "Who among the young aspires to be cultivated and learned?" These are irresistible questions for someone like me who, 10 months a year, works in the trenches with exactly those young adults characterized as the most reluctant readers. So I'm here to tell you that our young people can't be stereotyped and judged as a horde of media-duped lightweights and slackers. Sheer brilliance, intense intellectual hunger, the unquenched passion for ideas and oddball scholarly tastes are qualities that live as vibrantly today as they have in previous generations.

Yes, teaching in an elite private school is, as I tell my friends, the closest thing in education to Utopia, but I still confront significant obstacles to serious reading, though they may be different from those plaguing inner-city public schools. My students may have every educational advantage, but they are often denied the growing time to relax, reflect and dream, with or without a book in their hands.

Take a look at our fatigued, over-scheduled, parentally micro-managed next generation, and you'll understand why neither "Midmarch" nor "War and Peace" has been checked off the library shelves in months. Ours is a culture of parental expectations, educa-

tional pressures and pre-professional demands that put our students' leisure time and, I sometimes fear, personal sanity at risk. When the stream of tears flows into my office, as it does every year, over B-plus term papers, and when I see students pondering their resumes before the seventh grade, I don't need a degree in psychiatry from Harvard to sense that something is dreadfully wrong.

Any college counselor will tell you bluntly that it's much harder today than it was 20 years ago to get into an elite university or college. To manage that feat, a student needs to become what *New York Times* columnist David Brooks has dubbed an "organization kid," embodying all the virtues of a first-rate scholar, top athlete, star musician, talented writer and active public servant. With five starring roles to play simultaneously, how many world classics would you read in a year?

Yet if you hung around juniors and seniors in one of our area's college-oriented public or private schools, you'd be pleasantly surprised to find throngs of exceptionally learned and cultivated students. I'll never forget the day when, at the end of class, a student informed me that my use of the word "peruse" was ambiguous. I was sure I was asking the kids to skim a text for homework, but he pointed out that, according to the word's original definition, I could equally have been requesting a careful and thorough reading. It was a humbling moment. Another brought me a beautiful leather-bound copy of McSweeney's Quarterly to help broaden my horizons in the short story genre. And when a group of seniors at our school decided that they needed a forum for more probing political debate, they funded a newspaper and, with a dose of historical reverence, named it *Common Sense*.

In fact, many of these well-educated, culturally informed, even bookish students would be delighted to become more so, if only they had the time and freedom to cultivate learning for learning's sake. One of our former student body presidents would, I know, have been keen to write more poetry, had not his musical career and Princeton application been pressing. Our school harpist would gladly have written me a 10-page paper last term (I asked for five), had she not also been running track until 6 p.m. and playing with the National Symphony Orchestra until 10 the same night. *To be continued tomorrow.*

Nancy Schnog, co-editor of *Inventing the Psychological: Toward a Cultural History of Emotional Life in America* (Yale University Press), will begin her fifth year as an English teacher at the Potomac School in McLean, Va., this fall.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The Saipan Tribune welcomes communication may include editorials, editorial, or anticipated viewpoints related to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact information of the contributor. Letters that criticize other individuals or entities, or personalities, that do not conform to the standards of the Saipan Tribune will not be published. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to edit or shorten letters to fit space constraints or to make them more readable. Letters to the editor must be submitted in writing, electronic, or electronic form. Letters to the editor must be submitted in writing, electronic, or electronic form. Letters to the editor must be submitted in writing, electronic, or electronic form.

Public school teachers' Q&A

I'm writing this in light of the recent news article about the Praxis testing. I have recently been bombarded with questions from teachers, teacher representatives, and people in the community about the Praxis testing and BOE should have known this would happen. I hope this letter will help to enlighten those who have asked me on this matter (although all of these questions should have been answered prior to passing the policy and not after the fact).

The most asked question is, "Why do present teachers have to pay for the test?" especially when it is not part of their contract? Teachers that have already passed the Praxis test in another state want to know, "Why do I have to take it again?" with it being a "one-time" requirement? Another concern was how hard was the test and what kind of support or preparation is BOE and PSS going to provide and will teachers have to pay for the review? How hard is the test and what is the focus of the test? Some teachers want to know why they have to take the test when they are already certified in the CNMI—why wasn't the test just applied to new applicants? Which Praxis test will they be taking and how will PSS determine the minimum score? There are many other legitimate concerns of teachers but these should be enough to demonstrate the point I have been trying to make.

Brante Dashiell answered some of these questions in the news article but I would like to put things in perspective for the public school teachers. Teachers are being forced to pay for the test simply because BOE said teachers would pay and PSS hasn't told me anything about teachers paying for the review. Teachers who have passed the test should not be required to retake the same test. We call this redundancy and being teachers' representative on the board you'd think I should know but I don't. Based on the statement by Dashiell, who will be conducting the preview for testing, "the test is very difficult and I will not teach it. I will only show them ways on how to take the test (no subject matter)—give them the tools, but it's up to them (teachers) how to put them to use." This statement should be clear that the burden to prepare and pass the test is totally on teachers, not Dashiell or PSS.

I still don't know which Praxis test will be used and what the minimum score will be, which should have also been established before passing the policy, making this policy incomplete. The qualifying score may be the only safety net, which is why it hasn't been determined. But if our minimum score requirement is the lowest in the nation just to make sure all teachers pass, we will have defeated the whole purpose of setting a standard for teachers in testing.

I'm for the testing; we are far behind all the states when it comes to certifying teachers because most states only had to change their teacher certification test for Praxis. But I'm also sure the average teachers and reader can tell that the BOE and PSS put the cart (their agenda) before the horse (teachers and the BOE Rep). What happened to this collaboration we always talk about in PSS workshops? Evidently there is a double standard for collaborating within PSS.

I'm sure the average teacher doesn't mind taking the test under the right conditions, especially when they are well informed. Many teachers may have also been willing to pay if BOE had shown just a little respect and asked teachers for their help. We already know there is no money! But more importantly, BOE should know teachers now have real representation and the old tactics of the board and PSS are becoming obsolete. Just as BOE and PSS are raising the bar for teachers' qualifications, the bar is also being raised for BOE and PSS to show more respect for teachers. All teachers, one direction.

Ambrose M. Bennett
BOE Teacher Rep.

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Pedagogy as transparent encounter

Don't mean to throw three curve balls by the title of this piece, but I figured, if you're still reading, it is either you are curious of what this is all about, or you might have a suspicion of what it's going to be and want to check on your notion. Either way, we move on.

I was in fourth grade when I realized I had not learned to read or write. Sure, I could recite the content of my books, but I was by nature more auditory than visual. My school practiced repetitive group recitations, so I just memorized the lessons by the sequence of sounds I heard from the teacher and my classmates. I learned to mimic the right sounds without comprehension.

My elderly fourth grade teacher was a World War II veteran who loved math and enjoyed teaching it. I must have given enough correct answers to the problems he posed for the class because one day, I found myself sitting on a chair atop the teacher's table while the whole class gave me a military hand salute. That was my teacher's student recognition tactic.

Anyway, I was a runt in all the classes I was in, being two years younger than anyone in my class, so to be saluted by my older classmates in Grade Four was a great treat and boost to my runty self-esteem. It also provided the occasion for an awakening, the occurrence of the big pedagogical AHA!, a Eureka!, for this then budding self-conscious ego.

From then on, I got on board the learning wagon and was off to a journey of discovery of myself as a complex body (health), an interactive heart (language and arts), an inquisitive and ordering mind (math and science), and a socially engaged will (social studies).

What triggered the shift in consciousness was the elderly soldier who somehow, by his presence and facilitating tactics, managed to be a transparent entity by which I encountered myself. It was not principles, ideas, facts, or admonitions that did the trick. It was just an affirming and accepting presence who manifested his own quiet passion for his subject and his craft who managed to point me in the right direction. The teacher did not point to himself, nor did he parade competence and proficiency. I did not see the teacher. Rather, through him, the student just came on its own. Pedagogy happened.

Ironically, it would take another math teacher in seventh grade who, in her overzealous desire to have me memorize data and theories, charts and tables, managed to quench whatever awakened interest I might have had in the field of mathematics and science.

In mass education, we have been following the model-T Ford factory method of production. Raw materials come in on one end, graded steps follow a production line, and at the termination of various phases, tests are administered to ensure quality control. This is teaching by standards and benchmarks, addressing the normative and the mean. With social pressure, many places follow social promotion for the struggling marginal and peripheral students. (This year, Mayor Bloomberg of New York threatens to have all third

graders repeat grade if they fail to read and write.) Then the product is moved on until it reaches the completion line when a certificate is issued. The car is rolled out of the factory into the dealers' showroom, or, in this case, the student is graduated and moved on to the higher levels of education, or into the job market.

The expected attrition rate using this method is at least 20 percent. Ten percent is doomed to fail and is either left to the vagaries of fate, or anticipated and provided for in legislated social nets. The other 10 percent are usually bored to death and unless a creative teacher can find a way of individualizing their educational plan, and miraculously monitor their progress, they manage to find ingenious—though often destructive and unhelpful—ways to channel their inventiveness. Happily adjusted talented and gifted ones go on to pursue brilliant careers; misfits get advanced reservations to penal colonies, or worse, somehow make it into politics. The rest of the targeted middle make up the expendable peons that service the requirements of the illusive yet much heralded Pleasantville, USA.

Private schools have long ago discovered that the ratio of 8 to 10 students per teacher is just about the right formula for the possible authentic encounter between a learner and a teacher. Public education aims for a 20-22 students to a teacher ratio. CNMI schools are slightly overcrowded by this standard. Nevertheless, the authentic and effective encounter between student and teacher does happen, though they tend to be more of a hit or miss proposition, rather than the result of carefully crafted pedagogical designs.

Obviously, we need to abandon the factory line method of mass education, for we are not producing identical cars. We meet even at the earliest age unique individuals in their own inherited as well as chosen paths of learning journeys, yet we treat them like they were items in the production of identical paper clips. With the overcrowding of classrooms, the chance of teachers occasioning a transparent encounter with their students, the likelihood of real pedagogy happening where an individual child finds within himself and herself the gumption to embark in a self-propelled journey of learning discoveries, is close to nil.

On Saipan, we've expanded our incarceration capacities. And we are always trying to find another slot to employ or elect a friend and/or kin into government. That takes care of the 10 percent. Any brilliant ideas on what we do with the rest?

Threat is real in N. Korea and should be acted on

Taken together, the 9/11 commission report and the recent Senate Intelligence Committee report on Iraq teach us how incomplete intelligence can lead us to exaggerate some threats and miss others. This suggests that where the mists of uncertainty part to reveal an unambiguous threat to our national security, we must confront it squarely. We now face such an unambiguous threat from North Korea.

How do we know? Because we have lost track of five to six atomic bombs' worth of plutonium there.

In the 1990s, American technicians went to North Korea and supervised the recanning of 8,000 plutonium-laden spent fuel rods. Then the International Atomic Energy Agency sealed the Yongbyon facility containing the rods, installed cameras and kept on-site inspectors there to monitor those rods.

When North Korea bolted the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty last year, it kicked out the inspectors, turned off the cameras and broke the seals. No one outside North Korea knows where the rods and their plutonium are now. Many assume the plutonium has been separated from the spent fuel, but we do not know. We also know that North Korea has restarted the reactor that produced that plutonium and is therefore producing still more plutonium for more bombs.

We know that six plutonium bombs could wreak devastation beyond that ever yet caused by man. So why aren't we, as a nation, trying to find and secure that plutonium—which may even have been converted into weapons—as rapidly as possible?

One reason is that we think that North Korea is developing a program to produce highly enriched uranium, the other major form of atomic bomb. North Korea has, by turns, coyly asserted and denied this program. U.S. officials claim they found evidence in 2002 of an enrichment program in North Korea. Abdul Qadeer Khan, the Pakistani Typhoid Mary of nuclear proliferation, could have provided

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to The Baltimore Sun

Poneman served on the National Security Council staff under Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton; he is co-author of *Going Critical: The First North Korean Nuclear Crisis*.



the centrifuge blueprints and equipment. We hope that Pakistani authorities are obtaining all relevant information from Khan and sharing it with the appropriate authorities.

But consider what we don't know about the North Koreans' enrichment program: its location, how much centrifuge equipment they may possess, how many machines they have already built, what designs are being used, how capable their technicians are at mastering the difficult engineering of this demanding technology, whether North Korea has the uranium hexafluoride gas to feed into the centrifuges. Critically, we do not know how soon North Korea could produce bomb-grade highly enriched uranium, although published reports have not suggested that that day is imminent.

Now there is no question that the United States and other nations, working with the IAEA, should bend every effort to answer these questions. If an enrichment program exists, it must be found, declared, secured and verifiably dismantled.

It is also clear that U.S. policy is focused on the right goal: North Korea must disclose, safeguard and dismantle all of its nuclear fuel cycle, including any plutonium and enrichment facilities that may exist.

But the United States is taking the position that it will not cut a

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appropriate:

"God hath not promised
"Skies always blue
"God hath not promised
"Sun without rain,
"Joy without sorrow,
"Peace without pain."

He plans to rebuild on the same spot. And, unlike his wife, he doesn't think he'll be haunted.

"Life goes on," he said.
"You've just got to get on with it, that's all."

THREAT

From Page 11

deal on the plutonium that we know North Korea possesses unless Pyongyang "comes clean" on its enrichment program. This holds our ability to defuse Pyongyang's plutonium time-bomb hostage to a mystery we

may not unravel for some time.

What to do? Rather than let what we think about uranium hobble what we do about plutonium, we should separate these two threats for negotiating purposes into separate tracks that acknowledge their differences in terms of clarity and urgency.

That would allow us to work

simultaneously toward two urgent goals: arresting the plutonium threat while getting to the bottom of Pyongyang's uranium enrichment program. The United States would work with South Korea, Japan, China and Russia to provide some benefits to Pyongyang in exchange for shutting its plutonium-

producing reactor while securing the missing plutonium and shipping it immediately out of North Korea.

Under this strategy, the toughest tactical decision would be to figure out how many carrots and sticks to wield to eliminate the near-term, known plutonium threat, while leaving enough in reserve to

eliminate the longer-term, unknown uranium threat.

If, instead, we defer tackling the plutonium threat while waiting for the North Koreans to admit to the world that they have been lying about their uranium program, the odds are that we will confront tragedy before we receive truth.

Nation

Hurricane survivors haunted by bodies

PUNTA GORDA, Fla. (AP)—When Cindy Vallier returned home Saturday after Hurricane Charley, the bodies of the old couple across the road were lying in her front yard, covered in blankets.

Staring at the old man's black wheelchair and twisted walker wedged under her husband's upturned truck, Vallier wonders how she can bear to move back to Crystal Lake mobile home park.

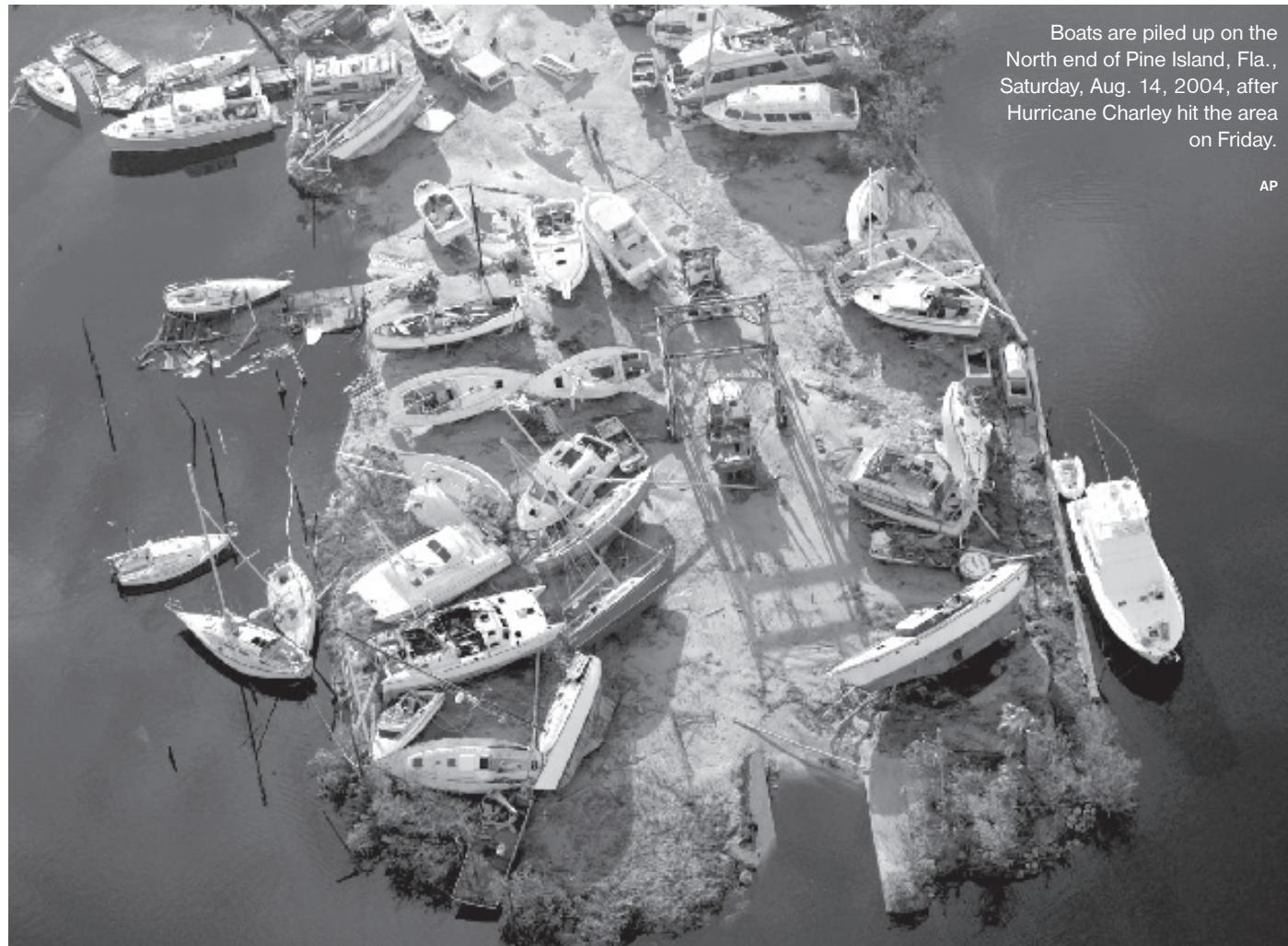
"Every time I walk down here, there's two dead people in my driveway," she said, envisioning the memory that will haunt her. She surveyed the twisted wreckage engulfing her home. It's what is left of her dead neighbors' doublewide trailer.

Crystal Lake, like much of Punta Gorda, is a scene of utter devastation. But like so many in this blessed and cursed part of Florida, Vallier knows she has no choice but to start again where she was.

"That was our home, that was our rental, that was our work truck," the 53-year-old disabled cleaning woman said, ticking off her list of ruined possessions. "That's all we got. I gotta move back here."

Vallier's neighbors were among four known deaths in this Charlotte County town nestled along the Gulf of Mexico. The victims' names were not immediately being released.

Vallier said the dead couple's grown son was thrown from the wreckage and was injured. He was found inside a closet of the trailer next door.



Boats are piled up on the North end of Pine Island, Fla., Saturday, Aug. 14, 2004, after Hurricane Charley hit the area on Friday.

AP

Charley's eye came right through Charlotte Harbor Friday afternoon, packing winds up to 145 mph.

Dane Gomez, 28, was renting his parents' old trailer in the Baileyville neighborhood of Punta Gorda. This little uninsured mobile home was his first taste of real independence.

"I called it home sweet home," Gomez said as he

combed the rubble in vain for his 3-year-old cat, Oscar. "I don't know why God intended for this to happen. It's not right. It's not fair. How do you get back what you lost?"

Many of those left homeless by Charley were retirees who came to Florida after a lifetime of sweat and toil. They awoke Saturday to find that their toil had only just begun.

Barbara Seaman stood in the wreckage of the clubhouse at the Windmill Village trailer park and gaped.

"This was so pretty," she said, standing by a marina choked with pontoons and pleasure boats.

The 69-year-old retired florist and her companion, Rudy Ricci, 78, returned Saturday to find most of their roof gone

and their trailer twisted so badly the doors would not open. As they arrived, a great blue heron landed in the back yard—waiting for his usual snack of turkey hot dogs.

"Where do we go now?" Seaman asked. "What do we do?"

Off Florida Street, Karen Hull walked through a home littered with decapitated plaster figurines. She and her husband,

Ed, had added a living room, a screen porch and a carport to their singlewide trailer in the three years they had lived there.

Now, they are back to square one.

"You know, what's here is the old home," Hull, 50, said with a rueful grin. "It was a nice place."

Her husband, Ed, stood nearby wearing a sweat-soaked T-shirt with the inscription: "Life is full of important choices."

It may be weeks before people in Punta Gorda get their power and water back. It will be much longer before they feel at home again.

Back at Crystal Lake, Vallier recalled the neighbors she lost.

She had cleaned home for the old woman many years ago, and she remembered the lady always tipped her. Vallier's husband, Clint Comstock, would sometimes help the old man, who was crippled with diabetes.

Vallier said the elderly couple had moved away from Punta Gorda to be closer to family. But they moved back about four months ago, because this was where the old man wanted to die.

"He got his wish," she said darkly.

Vallier's husband, who owns a tree-removal company, was too busy for sorrow.

He worked in the blistering sun to move what he could salvage into the only room of his house that survived—the bedroom. Scattered across the floor were programs from his father's memorial service in 1996.

LABOR

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MENTAL HEALTH

Bush plans to cut forces in Europe, Asia

By SCOTT LINDLAW
AP WRITER

SIOUX CITY, Iowa (AP)—President Bush has decided to bring home tens of thousands of U.S. troops from posts around the world—most of them in Europe and Asia—plus 100,000 of their family members and support personnel, U.S. officials said Saturday.

The changes will have no effect

on forces in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Bush will announce the move Monday in a speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars convention in Cincinnati, two senior administration officials said.

As part of the largest troop realignment in years, Bush will shift about 70,000 uniformed military personnel, most of them currently in Europe, the senior officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity. A

significant proportion will come home, though it was not clear when.

U.S. armed forces stationed aboard, other than Iraq and Afghanistan, now number about 200,000, of whom 100,000 are based in Europe. The Pentagon advised German officials earlier this year that it was considering

removing two Army divisions from Germany and replacing them with smaller, more mobile units.

The decision is meant to “strengthen our ability to respond to threats overseas,” one official said, declining to elaborate.

“It will improve our capability to protect America and our



Bush

allies and ease some of the burden on our uniformed military members and their families,” one official said.

The decision is sure to be a politically popular one at a time when Bush has refused to offer a timetable for bringing home the roughly 140,000 U.S. troops from Iraq.

Democrat John Kerry has said he would try to begin withdrawing some troops from Iraq within

his first six months in office.

That promise has drawn ridicule from Bush, who has said it would encourage the enemy to hunker down and wait out the United States. But it has also put pressure on the commander in chief at a time when the death toll on U.S. service members is approaching 1,000.

Bush did not mention his decision at a campaign rally in Sioux City, Iowa.

Calif. firefighters make gains vs blaze

By STEVE LAWRENCE
AP WRITER

BELLE VISTA, Calif. (AP)—Firefighters reported progress Saturday in their battle to contain a nearly 10,000-acre wildfire that destroyed 80 homes after being touched off by a spark from a lawnmower.

Crews expected to have the blaze fully contained by Monday evening.

“Everything is good news today, so far,” said Roy Del Carlo, a spokesman for the state Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

By midday Saturday, the fire had blackened 9,922 acres and destroyed 30 outbuildings and 10 vehicles in addition to the 80 homes, Del Carlo said.

The blaze was 80 percent contained and no longer threatening homes, he said. Most residents who were evacuated were being allowed to return to their property.

The fire began Wednesday when a lawnmower struck a rock in dry grass, setting off a



AP

Charred homes and vehicles are seen on Marin Road in Jones valley, Calif., Thursday, Aug. 12, 2004, after a wildfire swept through the area.

blaze that cut erratically through the pine-and-oak-covered hills south of Shasta Lake, about 140 miles northwest of Sacramento.

Residents said they were puzzled by the way the blaze spared

some homes while destroying others nearby. Del Carlo said 186 homes had been saved.

Officials said they don’t have an estimate of how much damage the blaze caused but said the

cost of fighting the fire will top \$1.8 million.

In central Washington, firefighters worked to gain the upper hand on several wildfires Saturday as forecasters predicted new

lightning strikes this weekend.

Authorities ordered a new round of evacuations late Saturday after a wildfire in Dryden grew to more than 2,100 acres and burned across a road. About 100 homes were threatened, but it was not immediately clear how many people were ordered to leave.

Lightning and thunderstorms were forecast in Clark, Skamania and Klickitat counties. Public Lands Commissioner Doug Sutherland said Saturday from Olympia, “all of which worries all of us a lot.”

A fire that covered more than 700 acres on Yakama tribal lands was under control and in the mop-up stage Saturday. A tribal dispatcher said that blaze started Tuesday.

Acreage numbers held steady in checks with fire officials Saturday but were expected to increase “because it was very active last night,” said Carol Tocco, spokeswoman for the Northwest Interagency Fire Center in Portland, Ore. Crews had not yet called in updated numbers.

“She has become a daughter, a sister and a granddaughter to so many people,” Dunaway said.

About 600 people attended the service, including the parents of both Lori Hacking and her husband, Mark, who has been charged with her murder. Lori Hacking, 27, has been missing since July 19. Authorities have been searching a landfill for her remains.

Scott Dunaway, president of the LDS Windsor Stake of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Orem, noted the outpouring of concern for the Hacking family as the disappearance drew national attention.

The service included a display of Hacking’s wedding dress, a poster-sized photograph of her and a plastic bucket used to gather donations for the search efforts that followed early reports of her disappearance.

Her brother, Paul Soares, recalled growing up with Lori. “We never worried about her dating the wrong kind of guy,” he said. “I’ve thought about this over the last couple of days.”

Mark Hacking, 28, reported his wife missing July 19. He said she had gone jogging and never showed up for work. That night police found him naked outside a hotel, and he was taken to a psychiatric hospital.

Representatives of the small Jewish school in Manhattan met with the state health commissioner in late 2002, but did not move forward with plans for a medical school, that source said.

Several calls by The Associated Press to the college Saturday were not returned.

The school’s board members include Charles Kushner, a real estate developer who gave millions to Jewish organizations and politicians, including McGreevey and former U.S. Sen. Robert Torricelli, D-N.J.

Man sought \$50M from McGreevey, aides say

TRENTON, N.J. (AP)—The man who claims Gov. James E. McGreevey sexually harassed him was pushing for a cash settlement of up to \$50 million before the governor decided to announce that he was gay and had an extramarital affair, sources told The Associated Press.

Golan Cipel’s demands also included a last-minute push to have McGreevey’s administration approve development plans for a private medical college in the state, two senior members of the administration said Saturday. Both sources spoke on condition of anonymity.

McGreevey’s lawyer refused to negotiate, one of the sources said, and rejected repeated offers to pay cash to avoid a lawsuit that would detail the governor’s relationship with Cipel, a former campaign aide whose appointment as a homeland security adviser with little experience provoked a major political controversy for the governor.

Cipel’s lawyer first contacted McGreevey on July 23, asking for \$50 million, one of the administra-

McGreevey’s missteps aided in downfall

From liberal Massachusetts to conservative Arizona, gay politicians have gone public and survived. New Jersey Gov. James E. McGreevey’s decision to come out on live television could have made him the most prominent among them—the nation’s first openly gay governor.

But there was much more to it than McGreevey’s sexual orientation—allegations of sexual harassment and rumors of being blackmailed, on top of months of fund-raising investigations and indictments. And that, say gay activists and political strategists, is what made all the difference: It wasn’t McGreevey’s homosexuality but his political missteps that

mean the end of his career.

“I think gayness is being used,” said Alan Rosenthal, a Rutgers University political science professor. “It’s not the root cause of his resignation. And it’s certainly not the root cause of McGreevey’s demise.”

Many things force politicians out of office—allegations of corruption, sex, infidelity. Rarely is it all of them.

If it were homosexuality alone, there’s much to argue he could have stayed. Rep. Jim Kolbe, Republican of Arizona, declared his orientation in 1996 as a gay magazine prepared to “out” him, and has not lost a race since. Democratic Rep. Barney Frank of Massachusetts was

reprimanded for hiring a male prostitute as an aide (with his own money), but has held his office since 1980.

“Why would you resign just because the public now knows you’re gay?” said Jennifer Veiga, a Democratic Colorado state senator who came out to her constituents while seeking her fourth term as a state House member. She’s won two elections since.

“Generally, there’s a sentiment, when public officials come out it’s a positive thing,” she said. “It’s a question of people seeing gay and lesbians in public life and understanding that we are the same as them, we share the same values. And we even make mistakes.” (AP)

the offers to avoid a sexual harassment lawsuit continued Thursday afternoon just as McGreevey made up his mind to declare his homosexuality and admit to an extramarital affair with a man.

Two sources close to Mc-

Greevey said Thursday that Cipel was the unnamed man the governor acknowledged having an affair with in his resignation speech that day.

The FBI is investigating whether a former employee tried to blackmail the governor,

according to law enforcement sources.

Investigators were notified after Cipel’s lawyer asked that

McGreevey intervene with a plan by Touro College to build a medical school in New Jersey.

“Touro was a last-ditch effort when the money dropped,” one of the administration sources said.

Representatives of the small Jewish school in Manhattan met with the state health commissioner in late 2002, but did not move forward with plans for a medical school, that source said.

Several calls by The Associated Press to the college Saturday were not returned.

The school’s board members include Charles Kushner, a real estate developer who gave millions to Jewish organizations and politicians, including McGreevey and former U.S. Sen. Robert Torricelli, D-N.J.

Lori Hacking’s body, presumed to be in the Salt Lake County landfill, has not been found despite numerous searches. Searchers with cadaver dogs were to return to the landfill Saturday night.

Asia

Philippines court sentences 17 to death

By OLIVER TEVES
AP WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A southern Philippines court sentenced 17 members of the al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf militant group to death Friday for kidnapping nurses from a hospital there three years ago.

Only 13 of the defendants were at the heavily guarded court house in Isabela, capital of the southern Basilan island, where a clerk read the ruling that described a kidnapping spree that began with the mass abduction of more than 50 pupils, teachers and a priest in 2000 and continued with the taking of 17 Filipino tourists and three Americans a year later. Two of those Americans died.

The four other convicts escaped during a mass jailbreak from the Basilan provincial prison earlier this year and were sentenced in absentia.

Also Friday, military helicopters using machine guns and rockets pounded the suspected hideout of a heavily armed kidnap gang elsewhere in the southern Philippines, killing at least 15 gunmen, police and the military said.

Col. Franklin del Prado, spokesman for the army's 6th Infantry Division, said about 20 members of the Pentagon gang were believed to be hiding in Lumabao, about 600 miles southeast of Manila, together with chieftain Tahir Alonto, who carries a \$17,800 bounty on his head. It was not known whether Alonto was killed.

Deputy national police chief Virtus Gil said he received a field report that



Some of the 17 members of the al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf, handcuffed to each other, listen as the court's verdict is read on them Friday, Aug. 13, 2004 in Isabela town in Basilan island in southern Philippines. AP

15 gunmen were killed in the raid. The military gave no immediate information about casualties.

The Pentagon group, linked to many ransom kidnappings on the main southern island of Mindanao, and the Abu Sayyaf are both on a U.S. list of terrorist organizations.

Pentagon members are holding two Filipino hostages, but it was unclear

whether the captives were in the same village.

Abu Sayyaf guerrillas raided a Basilan hospital in the town of Lamitan on June 2, 2001, to get medicine. Soldiers surrounded the building and the rebels took three female nurses and a male hospital clerk hostage to aid their escape.

Just weeks before, the extremist Muslim group had abducted mis-

sionary couple Martin and Gracia Burnham, of Wichita, Kan., Guillermo Sobero of Corona, Calif., and 17 Filipinos from a resort on western Palawan island and took them by speedboat to southern Basilan island. Sobero was among several hostages beheaded.

Two nurses and the clerk later escaped. Another nurse, Ediborah Yap, was killed more than a year later dur-

ing a military rescue operation in which Martin Burnham also died. His wife, Gracia, was wounded but was rescued and testified during the rebels' trial.

Prosecutor Ricardo Cabaron said each of the 17 Abu Sayyaf members received three death penalties for kidnapping the women. They were additionally sentenced to life imprisonment for kidnapping the male clerk.

"They will also be tried in other cases where they also participated," he said, referring to other kidnappings and killings.

The rebels separately abducted 25 Basilan farmers to help them carry weapons and equipment and later beheaded 12 of them, he said.

One of the convicts, Bashir Mandangan, expressed defiance, raising his fist and shouting, "Allahu Akbar!" or "God is Great!", when the verdict was handed down in the packed courtroom.

"No problem," he told reporters. "They can kill me 10 times, tell that to your government."

Executions in the Philippines are carried out by lethal injection.

Police and soldiers armed with assault rifles used three Simba armored personnel carriers to block roads leading to the courthouse. They frisked pedestrians and shooed away those on motorcycles.

U.S.-backed offensives have dislodged the guerrillas from their jungle lairs on Basilan. Philippine officials now consider the group a spent force, down from about 1,000 guerrillas four years ago to about 300, although it has been linked to several recent terror attacks.

Taiwan's president says China a threat

By WILLIAM FOREMAN
AP WRITER

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—China is threatening Asia's security by aiming missiles at Taiwan, boosting annual military spending by double digits and preparing for a possible conflict with U.S. and Japanese forces, Taiwan's leader said Saturday.

President Chen Shui-bian criticized China as his island held a massive air show featuring advanced F-16 and Mirage jet fighters. The planes and the president's words were reminders that the Taiwan Strait is one of the world's most dangerous potential flashpoints.

Taiwan and China have been locked in a sovereignty dispute for five decades. Beijing says the island belongs to Chinese territory and must accept

Communist rule or face war. But the Taiwanese have refused to join the mainland and have been drifting closer to seeking a permanent break.

Chinese leaders have shown signs they're getting impatient with Taiwan and might be leaning toward using force to unify the two sides, which split when the Communists won a civil war in 1949. A conflict could quickly involve the United States, which has long served as Taiwan's bodyguard.

Speaking at a democracy conference Saturday, the Taiwanese president warned that a bellicose China was a threat to the region, not just Taiwan.

"In recent years, China has been aggressively increasing its military might," Chen said. "It has been increasing its annual military spending by double digits. It has been deploying missiles directly

aimed at Taiwan. And it's planning to have the ability to stop U.S., Japanese and other international forces from getting involved in the Taiwan Strait."

Chen added: "China's plans to use its military to intimidate Taiwan is not only a challenge to Taiwan's democratic system, it's a challenge to the region's safety and security."

Taiwan's advanced jets and ships have long given the island an edge against China's huge but clunky military. For years, China couldn't match the French-made Mirage and U.S.-built F-16s that streaked across the skies Saturday at the air show in northern Taoyuan County.

But China has been stocking up on advanced planes, destroyers and submarines from Russia. And the balance of military power is expected to soon tip in Beijing's favor.

Australia insists North Korea has missiles

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—Foreign Minister Alexander Downer reasserted his claim that North Korea has long-range missiles capable of striking Australia as he departed Sunday on a diplomatic mission to persuade Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear programs.

On Friday, Downer said the reclusive Stalinist state had missiles that could fly the 10,000 kilometers (6,200 miles) from North Korea to Sydney—although missile experts have rejected this claim as impossible.

On Sunday he said North Korea

developed a number of Taepo Dong 2 long-range missiles before freezing the program in 1999.

"We believe they have built some prototypes of this missile," Downer told Nine Network television before leaving for Pyongyang. "Nobody's suggesting North Korea is about to attack Sydney. It's an illustration of the range of the missile systems."

Downer said that aid to North Korea was contingent on Pyongyang showing signs that it was ending its nuclear weapons development programs.

"The North Koreans understand that the dismantling of their nuclear programs is a prerequisite for getting additional financial assistance, additional food aid but, over and above that, getting the sort of security guarantee that North Korea's after," Downer said.

North Korea wants the West to send energy aid and lift economic sanctions.

During multinational talks in Beijing in June, the United States proposed a step-by-step plan for Pyongyang to dismantle and allow monitoring of all its nuclear activities in return for some aid.

Rival militias clash in Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—Fighters loyal to rival warlords clashed in western Afghanistan Saturday, sending tanks into the streets of a regional capital in the latest jolt to the country's shaky security ahead of national elections. More than 20 fighters were killed by one estimate.

The U.S. military expressed concern about the violence but showed no sign of intervening. So far, U.S.-trained troops in Afghanistan's national army were also staying out of the fight—a sign of the central government's weakness in the face of local warlords.

The clashes pitched forces loyal to Herat Gov. Ismail Khan, one of the country's most powerful warlords, against rivals in the north, east and south of the province.

In the fiercest clash, a commander from Shindand, about 370 miles west of the capital, Kabul, said his men seized a Soviet-built air base in an overnight attack.

"By 4 a.m. we had captured the whole of the district, including the airport and the division," Amanullah, an ethnic Pashtun commander who goes by one name, told The Associated Press.

Afghan forces have few aircraft, but the base is home to a militia division believed loyal to Khan, a Tajik.

Amanullah said his fighters, armed with machine-guns and rockets, had killed 14 of Khan's men and captured another 20. Seven of his own men also died, he said.

One of Amanullah's commanders, Abdul Karim, said three more of his fighters were wounded, and a director of the hospital in Herat said three patients had been admitted from Shindand with minor injuries—two civilians and a soldier.

An Associated Press Television News reporter in Herat saw tanks heading south toward Shindand. Knots of militiamen stood guard at major junctions in the city.

Abdul Wahed Tawakali, a spokesman for Khan, said there was "hand-to-hand fighting" near the base, but denied it had fallen. He had no information on casualties.

The battles are the latest in a string of factional clashes across the north and west of the country and present a fresh security headache for U.S.-backed President Hamid Karzai and the American military ahead of Oct. 9 presidential elections.

Forces of other dissident commanders fought Khan's troops near Karukh to the north of Herat city and in Chishti Sharif, a valley in the Hindu Kush mountains, said Naseer Ahmad Halawi, Herat's intelligence chief.

Both sides said the attacks were coordinated.

Karzai condemned the violence as "an attack on the state" and vowed to take "serious measures" against the rebel commanders, according to a statement released by his office.

Pakistan arrests two in assassination try

By ASIF SHAHZAD

AP WRITER

LAHORE, Pakistan (AP)—Pakistan arrested two men suspected in an assassination attempt against the nation's prime minister-designate last month that killed nine people, officials said Saturday.

Police and intelligence agents captured the men—Qari Noor Mohammed, an Afghan who allegedly coordinated the attack, and Mohammed Imran, a Pakistani—in separate raids Friday night in the eastern province of Punjab.

They are the latest arrests in a terror crackdown that has netted more than 30 suspects including key al-Qaida figures in the past month.

Meanwhile, the state news agency, Associated Press of Pakistan, reported that security forces had detained a "number of potential terrorists" in raids throughout the country, foiling a plot to sabotage Saturday's celebrations of Pakistan's 57th anniversary of independence from British rule.

Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed confirmed those arrests but gave no further details.

Finance Minister Shaukat Aziz, who is tapped to be become the next prime minister, escaped unharmed from the July 30 attack in a town west of the capital Islamabad. A suicide bomber detonated explosives strapped to his body near

Aziz's car, killing himself and eight other people, including Aziz's driver.

Mohammed was arrested in a raid on an Islamic seminary in Faisalabad, an industrial town about 75 miles southwest of Lahore, Punjab's capital, said Mohammed Amin, the chief of police in Faisalabad.

A satellite telephone and "important" documents were seized during the raid on the seminary that Mohammed headed, Amin said.

Amin said Mohammed coordinated the attack on Aziz, but did not give details.

Imran was arrested in Jauharabad, a town 160 miles west of Lahore, an intelligence official said on condition of anonymity.

The official said Imran, a member of the outlawed Sunni Muslim extremist group Jaish-e-Mohammed, was present at the scene of the attack on Aziz. It was unclear what role Imran allegedly had in the bombing.

A Web site claiming to speak for Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network took responsibility soon after the attack, and threatened more bloodshed if Pakistan continues handing over militants to the United States. It was impossible to verify the note's authenticity, but Pakistani officials have said the attack bore al-Qaida's fingerprints.

The terror group is also believed behind two attempts to kill President Gen. Pervez Musharraf in December.

Pakistan leader vows to crush terrorists

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—

President Gen. Pervez Musharraf vowed to crush foreign terrorists and appealed to citizens to reject extremism as police arrested two key suspects in a suicide bombing against the prime minister designate.

Authorities also claimed to have foiled a terrorist plot to sabotage celebrations of the 57th anniversary of Pakistan's independence from British rule, which went ahead Saturday amid tight security.

Since mid-July, Pakistan has nabbed more than 30 terrorist suspects and unearthed valuable al-Qaida intelligence that has led to a dozen more arrests in Britain and a terror alert in the United States.

Musharraf, a key ally of America in its war against terror, appealed to his fellow citizens to reject extremism and intolerance and "fight off elements who want to push Pakistan into darkness."

"I am confident that the government, with the active collaboration of people, would crush such forces," he said at the presidential palace late Friday.

The state-run news agency, Associated Press of Pakistan, reported that security forces had nabbed a "num-

ber of potential terrorists" in raids throughout the country, foiling a plot to attack important government installations on Independence Day.

Officials, however, refused to divulge details of the reported plot or the arrests.

In eastern Punjab province, police and intelligence agents captured the alleged coordinator of the July 30 assassination attempt against Shaukat Aziz, the finance minister who is set to become the next prime minister in the coming weeks.

The suspect, Qari Noor Mohammed, an Afghan cleric, was arrested late Friday at his seminary in the industrial city of Faisalabad.

City police chief Mohammed Amin said a satellite telephone and "important" documents were seized during the raid, but would not say what the documents contained.

Also, Mohammed Imran, a Pakistani also accused in the attack, was captured in the eastern town of Jauharabad, an intelligence official said on condition of anonymity.

Pakistani officials have said that they suspect al-Qaida had a hand in the attack on Aziz, which took place in a town west of Islamabad and left nine people

dead, including the suicide bomber. Aziz himself was unhurt.

A Web site claiming to speak for Osama bin Laden's network took responsibility soon after the attack, and threatened more bloodshed if Pakistan continued handing over militants to the United States. It was impossible, however, to verify the note's authenticity.

Al-Qaida is also believed behind two attempts to kill Musharraf in December.

Musharraf has since stepped up efforts to break al-Qaida's network in Pakistan, including a series of military operations in a lawless tribal region near the Afghan border which has been used as a refuge by Arab and Central Asian militants and a terror-training base.

Those offensives left scores of militants and soldiers dead, and apparently sent other al-Qaida fugitives scurrying to towns and cities around Pakistan where the recent arrests have been made.

Among those who reportedly fled the Waziristan border region was the top al-Qaida figure arrested in the recent crackdown: Tanzanian Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, who was indicted for the 1998 bombings on U.S. embassies in east Africa that killed more than 200 people.

Security forces on high alert as India celebrates independence

NEW DELHI (AP)—Guarded by sharpshooters and commandos during his Independence Day address, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh committed the nation Sunday to pursuing dialogue with archrival Pakistan, noting that cross-border terrorism makes the task more difficult.

"It is our intention to carry forward with firm resolve and sincerity the composite dialogue process with Pakistan," Singh said, in a speech broadcast to the nation on the 57th anniversary of independence from British rule.

The peace that "we wish to build must stand on the twin pillars of mutual trust and confidence. But cross-border terrorism and violence makes this task more difficult and complex," Singh said. It was his only comment that drew applause from thousands of government officials, children and ordinary Indians.

India accuses Pakistan of arming and training Islamic militants who are fighting

to wrest the disputed and divided Kashmir region from India, a charge Pakistan denies. More than 65,000 people have been killed in the conflict since 1989.

Indian authorities said they feared the possibility of attacks by the separatists during the Independence Day celebrations.

Helicopters patrolled the skies while nearly 65,000 police and paramilitary troops were deployed on the ground to prevent violence in the capital. The police blocked streets throughout central New Delhi, even those miles from the 17th century Red Fort, where Singh gave his speech.

An umbrella group of separatist organizations, the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, called for a general protest strike in Kashmir on Sunday, as they do each Independence Day, to express their rejection of Indian sovereignty.

Singh, 72, is facing several challenges in his third month in office,

including opposition over his decision to raise prices of fuel and cooking gas, poor monsoon rains that have damaged crops, and inflation that has jumped to a 3 1/2 year high of 7.5 percent. Courts have issued arrest warrants against two members of his Council of Ministers, and one of them was arrested, after resigning from office to face murder charges in a decades-old riot case.

However, he has been praised for moving forward with his predecessor's initiative to pursue peace talks with archrival Pakistan.

After coming close to fighting a fourth war in 2002, Pakistan and India embarked on a peace process aimed at resolving their differences, including their conflicting claims on Kashmir.

India's President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam sent a message on Saturday to Pakistan's President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, saying, "The recent interactions between our two countries ... augur well."

India hangs convicted murderer, rapist

CALCUTTA, India (AP)—A man convicted of raping and murdering a teenage girl was hanged at dawn Saturday after saying a brief prayer, in India's first execution in nine years.

Dozens of anti-death penalty protesters held a vigil outside the prison, and were silent at 4:30 a.m., when Dhananjay Chatterjee, 39, was hanged in the courtyard of Alipore Correctional Home, where he has spent the last 13 years in solitary confinement.

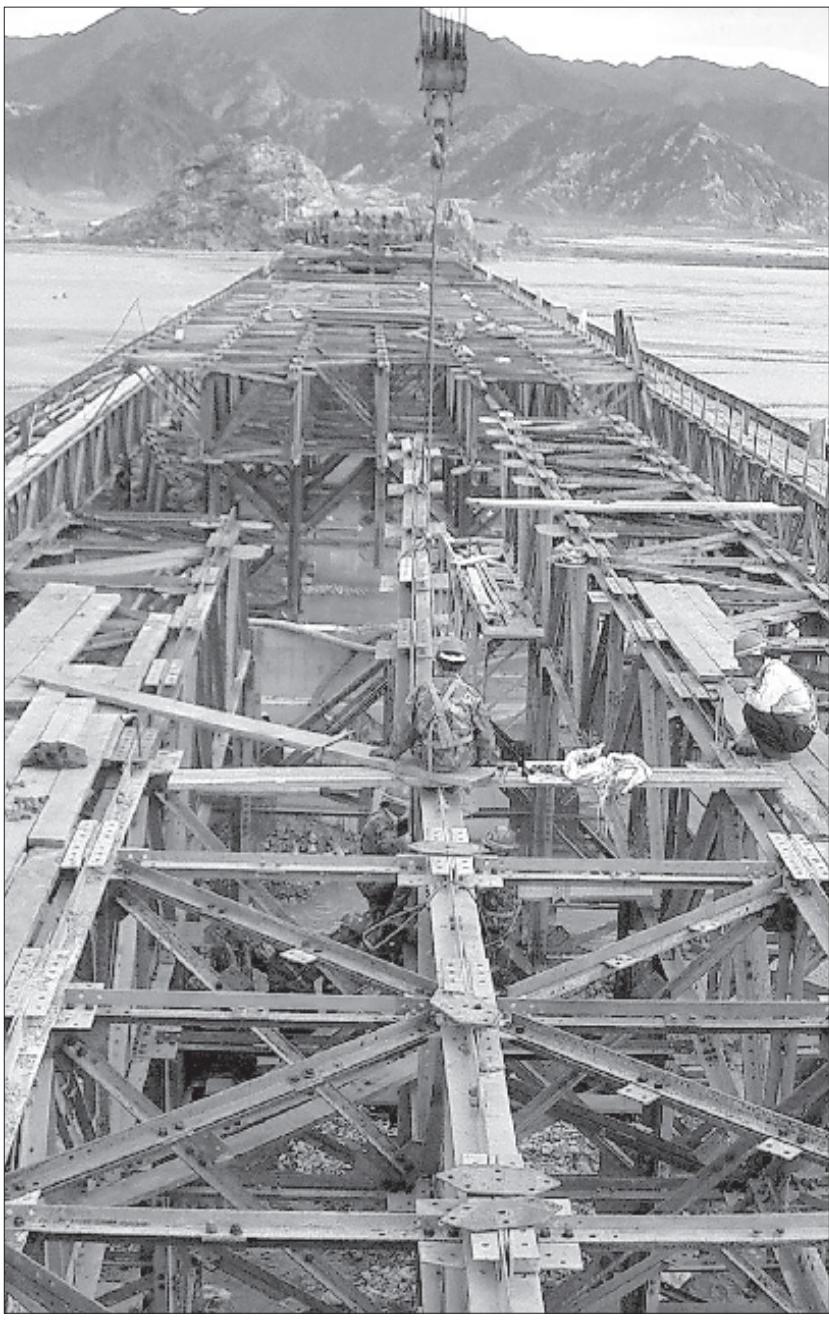
He "was absolutely fine, in a normal mood ... Just before hanging, he told the jail officials 'God bless you,'" Inspector-General of Prisons Joydeb Chakraborty told reporters. "He had

some sweetmeat and a little bit of curd before stepping on to the gallows."

Before climbing to the gallows, Chatterjee, the son of a Brahmin priest, said a prayer, prison officials said. Religious songs were played on a cassette player.

Chatterjee's shrouded body was later cremated in an electric furnace, police said. Some Hindu funeral rites could not be completed because his family wasn't there.

Chatterjee was convicted of raping and suffocating Hetal Parekh, 14, who lived in a Calcutta apartment building where he worked as a security guard. He was arrested in 1990 and transferred to solitary confinement after his



BRIDGE TO THE HIMALAYAS

Construction workers assemble parts of the 928-meter-long (3,100-foot-long) railway bridge under construction over the Lhasa River Saturday Aug. 14, 2004 outside Lhasa, Tibet, far west of China. Laborers building the first railway to Tibet have finished laying half the track across the Himalayan territory, working in mountain air so thin that they breathe bottled oxygen, a leader of the project said Saturday.

World

180 Congo refugees killed in Burundi camp

By ALOYS NIYOYITA
AP WRITER

GATUMBA, Burundi (AP)—Attackers with machetes and automatic weapons raided a U.N. refugee camp in western Burundi, shooting and hacking to death at least 180 men, women and children, U.N. officials said.

Burundian Hutu rebels claimed responsibility, insisting the camp for Congolese Tutsi refugees fleeing tribal fighting was a hide-out for Burundi army soldiers and Congolese tribal militiamen.

But most of the victims appeared to be women and children. On Saturday, their charred remains lay among the cooking utensils and the smoldering remnants of their former homes.

The attack late Friday resembled the killing during the 1994 genocide in Burundi's neighbor Rwanda and raised fears of retaliatory violence that could undo peace efforts in Congo.

The camp, 12 miles from the Congolese border, sheltered ethnic Tutsi refugees, known as the Banyamulenge, who fled fighting in Congo's troubled border province of South Kivu, U.N. officials visiting the camp said.

"People were sleeping when the attack happened," Eliana Nabaa, spokeswoman of the U.N. mission in Congo said. "People were killed as they tried to escape."

Isabelle Abric, spokeswoman for the U.N. mission in Burundi, said 159 people were killed and 101 were wounded during the attack in Gatumba. At least 30 of the wounded died in hospitals, she said.

Leaflets distributed before the raid warned refugees to leave the camp or face attacks by a coalition of Burun-



People stand near the covered bodies of victims at the Gatumba camp Saturday, Aug. 14, 2004, after they were killed during an attack Friday Aug. 13 2004 in the refugee camp in Gatumba, Burundi, which housed Congolese ethnic Tutsis.

refuge in Burundi," Ndayizeye said. The rebels "declared that they attacked a military camp and that the soldiers fled in this camp but I saw no soldier's body except those of young children, women and old persons."

Congo's President Laurent Kabila said he "energetically condemns this ignoble act," and demanded an international investigation.

In a statement, Kabila also called on the Burundian government and the U.N. refugee agency to secure the area and protect "the vulnerable population."

The attack occurred one day after Congolese Vice President Azarias Ruberwa visited the camp to encourage the refugees to return home. He went back to the camp Saturday, describing the attack as "a genocide committed in a foreign country."

U.N. officials are studying whether the attack was carried out with the assistance of Congolese tribal fighters known as the Mayi Mai or Rwandan rebels based in eastern Congo, Nabaa said.

The Rwandan insurgents include members of the former army and the extremists Interahamwe militia who fled to Congo after playing a key role in the 1994 Rwandan genocide. More than 500,000 minority Tutsis and political moderates from the Hutu majority were killed in the 100-day slaughter organized by the extremist Hutu government then in power.

Rwandan President Paul Kagame said Friday's massacre proves "that there have been incidents that are ignored by the international community and the U.N. where people are being killed in eastern Congo, being targeted for who they are."

Palestinian students demand jobs in Gaza

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP)—More than 100 unemployed university graduates stormed a Palestinian Authority building in a Gaza Strip refugee camp Saturday, calling on the Palestinian leadership to provide them with jobs.

The incident, which ended peacefully after about two hours, was the latest sign of discontent with the beleaguered Palestinian Authority. The graduates—all of them unarmed—said the authority had promised them employment and failed to live up to its obligation.

"We have asked all those in charge and all the members of the Palestinian Legislative Council to find a solution for our situation by finding us jobs, but

no one is listening to us," said Shadi Shaath, a leader of the protesters.

He said the protesters left the building because they weren't prepared for a lengthy standoff, but he promised further action in the coming days if Palestinian officials don't respond.

A series of kidnappings and violent demonstrations have plagued the Gaza Strip and West Bank in recent weeks.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's plan to pull out of all Gaza and four West Bank settlements next year has caused a power struggle as rival Palestinian factions maneuver for leadership positions ahead of the proposed withdrawal.

Palestinians have shown growing discontent with the Palestinian Au-

thority, which is headed by Yasser Arafat, accusing it of widespread corruption and ineffectiveness.

Last Thursday, dozens of homeless Palestinians, led by gunmen, stormed the governor's office in Gaza's battered Rafah refugee camp, evicting officials and charging that Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority is not helping them. The standoff ended four hours later after officials pledged to help the people find housing.

In the past few weeks, the turmoil has trickled from Gaza to the West Bank, where a growing number of Palestinians have begun to voice criticism of Arafat's corruption-plagued regime and demand reforms.

Notre Dame hit with anti-Semitic graffiti

PARIS (AP)—Anti-Semitic graffiti, including a sign saying "death to Jews," was found Saturday scrawled on the grounds of the Notre Dame cathedral in Paris.

The graffiti, which included a swastika, was written in black marker on a low wall along the cathedral facing the Seine River. Three stones of the wall had been dislodged, police said.

Paris Mayor Bertrand Delanoë said he was "saddened and sickened" by the vandalism. "I deeply hope that those respon-

sible for this new insult to the values of our civilization will be quickly identified and severely sanctioned," he said.

The graffiti was discovered four days after vandals wrote anti-Semitic slurs on about 60 tombstones in a cemetery in the southeastern city of Lyon. Similar graffiti also covered a World War II monument to Jewish soldiers at the entrance to La Mouche cemetery.

Tombs at two Jewish cemeteries in Alsace have been desecrated in the past three months.

The archbishop of Paris, Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger, suggested that youths caught up in a "game of provocation, a game of cat and mouse" and "manipulated" by others might be behind recent attacks, including cemetery desecrations.

"We must quickly find out who is doing this," he said from Lourdes, where Pope John Paul II was visiting.

The mayor said that places of worship and cemeteries around Paris have been under increased surveillance since July.

KHARTOUM, Sudan (AP)—President Omar el-Bashir pledged to end violence in Sudan's western Darfur region in comments aired Saturday, but his vice president said it was not practical to disarm within 30 days the Arab militias responsible for the killings of some 30,000 people.

El-Bashir blamed "plotters" and "enemies" for the violence in Darfur in remarks apparently aimed at defending his government's claims that rebel groups were behind the conflict.

Arab militias, known as the Janjaweed, have carried out a campaign of killings in the vast western region, killing and raping black African villagers in what the U.S. Congress has called a genocide. The United States, European Union and humanitarian groups accuse el-Bashir's government of backing the militiamen in an attempt to put down the black African rebel groups.

Khartoum denies backing the Janjaweed. Some 30,000 have been killed in the violence, and 2.2 million people are in urgent need of food and other aid.

On July 30, the U.N. Security Council gave Sudan 30 days to disarm the militias and quell ethnic violence in Darfur region or face economic or diplomatic penalties.

"We are doing our best to meet that deadline but definitely, due to logistical problems and limitations we have at the moment, I don't think the time frame is practical," Vice President Ali Osman Mohammed Taha told the British Broadcasting Corp., in an interview recorded on Aug. 9.

Darfur's troubles stem from long-standing tensions between nomadic Arab tribes and African farming neighbors over dwindling water and agricultural land.

Violence exploded in February 2003 when two rebel groups—the Justice and Equality Movement and the Sudan Liberation Army—took up arms over what they regard as unjust treatment by the government in their struggle with Arab countrymen.

El-Bashir said the rebels began fighting because they were disappointed that successful efforts were underway to end a separate, long running conflict in southern Sudan.

"Every good thing that happens to Sudan is unfavorably received by plotters involved in a conspiracy (against the government) and, subsequently, the plotting of the enemies increases," el-Bashir said in his speech, which was taped Thursday.



American soldiers patrol the streets during a cease fire with the Mahdi army in the holy city of Najaf, southern Iraq Saturday Aug. 14, 2004.

Democracy may be real winner in Venezuela

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—Two years after a failed coup against President Hugo Chavez, the opposition's bitter and often bloody effort to oust him culminates in a recall vote Sunday.

The former military commander, who himself led a failed coup in 1992, insists he will win the referendum and keep his job. But the real winner may be Venezuela's shaky democracy, with voters getting a chance to decide their country's future.

"This is a victory for the constitution, for the people, for democracy," Chavez said Saturday, promising to respect the results "no matter what they are."

The leftist leader, who initially poured cold water on the recall effort, spoke after meeting with former President Jimmy Carter and Cesar Gaviria, the head of the Organization of American States, both key mediators in the ongoing political crisis.

Gaviria noted the referendum is the fruit of complicated negotiations, the gathering of millions of signatures and rulings by the National Elections

Council and the Supreme Court.

"We all are hoping for an outcome that all sides can accept," Gaviria told The Associated Press. "This is what Venezuelan democracy needs."

Carter warned, however, that staging the referendum alone was not a magic solution for healing Venezuela. "We recognize that tomorrow's vote is one more exercise in democracy," Carter said at a news conference with Gaviria. "It will not resolve all the country's problems."

Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jesus Perez said the days of coups and upheaval are over.

"I believe that Venezuela's democracy has now been consolidated," Perez told the AP. "The coup-plotters elements are more isolated everyday."

The impoverished South American nation of 24 million remains sharply divided over Chavez, with supporters applauding his efforts to improve life for the poor majority and opponents accusing him of becoming increasingly authoritarian.

Tropical storm Earl nears Caribbean isles

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados (AP)—Tropical Storm Earl gathered strength Saturday, growing from a tropical depression as it neared several eastern Caribbean islands.

Forecasters said Earl could strengthen to a hurricane by Monday, once it reaches the Caribbean Sea. The fifth tropical storm of the Atlantic season prompted storm warnings in the eastern Caribbean islands, from Trinidad and Tobago to St. Lucia.

Earl's center was forecast to move over those islands Sunday and could be-

come the season's third hurricane—with winds of 74 mph or greater—as it moves toward Jamaica and Cuba, said Robbie Berg, a meteorologist at the U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami.

Cuba on Friday was battered by Hurricane Charley, which killed four people. At least 41 buildings collapsed in the storm, and 200,000 people were evacuated in western and central Cuba.

Saturday evening Earl had sustained winds of 40 mph and its center was located about 375 miles east-southeast of Barbados, according to the Hurricane Center.

New clashes may loom as Najaf talks fail

By ABDUL HUSSEIN AL-OBEIDI
AP WRITER

NAJAF, Iraq (AP)—Negotiations to end the fighting in Najaf broke down Saturday, threatening to spark a resurgence of the fierce clashes between Shiite militants and a combined U.S.-Iraqi force that have plagued this holy city for more than a week.

The collapse of talks will likely cast a pall over Iraq's National Conference, which starts Sunday, gathering 1,300 delegates from all over Iraq in what is considered a vital step toward establishing democracy.

The chief government negotiator said he decided to quit the talks in Najaf after three fruitless days, but representatives of militant cleric Muqtada al-Sadr said a deal had been all but reached before interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi personally intervened to quash it.

"It is a conspiracy to commit a big massacre," al-Sadr's top negotiator, Sheik Ali Smeisim, told the pan-Arab Al-Jazeera television station.

Soon after the talks broke down, a massive Army and Marine force of tanks, Humvees and armored vehicles lined up inside a U.S. military base in Najaf for an assault on the militants, which Allawi reportedly called off.

"We were sitting here waiting for authorization to go clear the militia. We never got that authorization," said Marine Maj. David Holahan. "We'll continue op-

erations as the prime minister ... sees fit."

U.S. forces called a halt to a major offensive in the city on Friday to give negotiations a chance. The fighting in Najaf has angered many in Iraq's Shiite majority, complicating a difficult situation for Allawi's U.S.-backed government, which has been keen to show it is in control.

The chairman of the National Conference, Fuad Masoum, insisted the violence would not affect the three-day gathering.

"This is a perfect time for the conference to discuss the current problems and find solutions," he said.

About 10,000 demonstrators from as far away as Baghdad arrived in Najaf on Saturday to show their solidarity with the militants and act as human shields to protect the city and the holy Imam Ali shrine, where fighters from al-Sadr's Mahdi Army have taken refuge since the fighting started Aug. 5.

Amid worries that fighting would resume, Coalition officials reiterated Saturday they would not enter the shrine.

"It is not our intention to go anywhere near the holy sites. We understand their significance to the Shia and we respect the Shia," Maj. Gen. Andrew Graham, deputy commanding general of the Multinational Corps, told The Associated Press. "The irreverence ... is (al-Sadr's) and not ours."

During the negotiations, al-Sadr demanded a U.S. withdrawal from Najaf, the freeing of all Mahdi Army fighters

in detention and amnesty for all the fighters in exchange for disarming his followers and pulling them out of the shrine and Najaf's old city, where they have taken refuge, aides said.

After days of discussion—and just hours after Najaf's governor said he believed a breakthrough was imminent—Iraq's National Security Adviser Mouwaffaq al-Rubaie announced the talks were over.

"Our goal was to spare blood, preserve security and for the militias to put down their weapons," he said.

"We have been talking and discussing these matters for three days, but reached no positive conclusion," he said. "After three days, my government thought there was no use in continuing."

Al-Rubaie said he was leaving Najaf but would return for any new talks.

However, Qais al-Khazali, al-Sadr's spokesman in Najaf, said a deal had been reached and al-Sadr—who was not in the talks himself—had signed it when "we were surprised that they got instructions from Dr. Allawi to leave."

After nearly two days of quiet during the negotiations, al-Khazali predicted an impending government offensive and appealed to "Arab and Islamic countries to firmly stand up against this massacre."

Ahmed al-Shaibany, another al-Sadr spokesman, blamed the talks' failure on the Americans—who were not participating—saying they had refused a demand to pay compensation for the families of those killed in the fighting.

Pope reassures pilgrims at France shrine

LOURDES, France (AP)—His voice weak, his legs unsteady as he knelt in prayer, Pope John Paul II joined thousands of other ailing pilgrims Saturday at a cliffside shrine known for its miraculous cures, telling them he shares in their physical suffering and assuring them the burden is part of God's "wondrous plan."

The rare reference to his own illnesses—Parkinson's disease and crippling knee and hip ailments—came at the start of a two-day visit to the shrine to the Virgin Mary, where Roman Catholics seek healing, hope and inner peace.

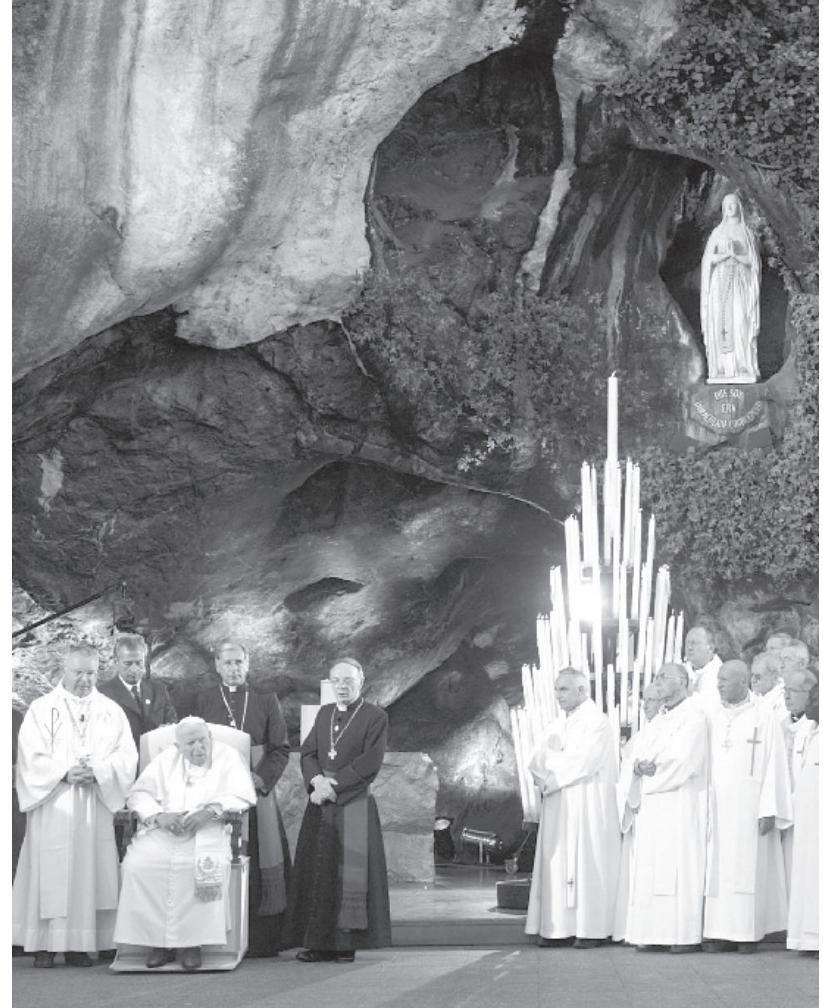
"With you I share a time of life marked by physical suffering, yet not for that reason any less fruitful in God's wondrous plan," the 84-year-old pope said in remarks read for him by a French cardinal.

"Dear brothers and sisters who are sick, how I would like to embrace each and every one of you with affection, to tell you how close I am to you and how much I support you."

John Paul spoke haltingly in French, slurring his words, when addressing French President Jacques Chirac shortly after arriving from Rome. Later, he made no attempt to read his brief speech when he prayed in the ivy-covered grotto where Mary is said to have appeared to St. Bernadette in 1858.

He was hoisted from a wheeled throne onto a kneeler to pray at the grotto, but after less than a minute he slipped, and aides immediately steadied him and lifted him back into his chair.

Then, following Lourdes' custom, he sipped a glass of water from the spring that flows underground, believed by



Pope John Paul II prays at the Virgin Mary shrine cave in Lourdes, southwestern France, Saturday, Aug. 14, 2004.

many to have curative powers.

"Everything is normal, the pope was only tired," papal spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls told reporters. "We have to get used to seeing him that way."

In the late afternoon John Paul returned to the grotto and delivered a brief speech, although with some dif-

ficulty, saying "I have reached the goal of my pilgrimage" with the stop.

Asther Mora, a 48-year-old pilgrim from Madrid, Spain, expressed mixed feelings about the pope's visit.

"Happy because I've seen him, and sad because this will be the last time I'll see him because of his health," she said.

Health & Fitness

Life & Style

An Olympic obsession with little pins

By MICHAEL ORDONA

LOS ANGELES TIMES

They seem like anyone else. They're bankers, printers, husbands and wives, even celebrities. But they have a dirty little secret. They're trapped in the throes of an obsession that can strain marriages and even ruin lives.

"These little pieces of metal have amazing powers over people," says veteran collector and dealer Jeff Fleming of Utah. "Olympic pins are like dope or gambling."

Among the famous Olympic pin addicts are Katie Couric, Ahmad Rashad and Jim Nabors, as well as such athletes as Rick Barry and third-generation Olympian Jimmy Shea, reportedly a hard-core trader. It's a hobby that seems innocent... until you're hooked.

There are dozens of Websites devoted to the hobby and hordes of collectors around the world waiting like hawks to swoop down upon new styles the instant they're minted. They can be as simple as a flag with the famed rings logo or as ornate as a large, blooming golden flower containing many small symbols within.

Media outlets create their own, such as NBC's video camera pin with a flashing red light. Corporate sponsors such as Coca-Cola lure victims with series pins that drive buyers to distraction, fearing to miss one in the set. Thousands of different designs are fashioned for each Olympics, with sales at Sydney reportedly reaching 65 million pins in 2000. Major corporations help spread the pandemic by setting up trading areas in cities hosting the Games, drawing mobs of wild-eyed enthusiasts.

Suzanne Papazian, who has attended 11 Olympics in a row, tells of completing

a set of pins while in Nagano, Japan, that formed the shape of a Coke bottle for about \$100, then selling it right away to a desperate Japanese collector for \$1,000. Of course, she had also assembled a set for herself. Fleming says, "It's like a panic attack; it's like buck fever, you find insanity among people during the Games. When people have to have something, they'll pay anything for it. It takes over your common sense."

Fleming says he has witnessed many an ugly scene over pins, like the former torch-bearer who resorted to shoplifting them from Fleming's store and another obsessed client who spent himself into an inextricable hole for pins, beautiful pins. "He ended up in a hospital under a suicide watch, all because of pins."

Some will do just about anything for a fix. Ray Erwin of Los Angeles, who estimates his collection at 10,000 pieces, says that a woman in Barcelona asked him for six pins in exchange for her company for the night. Not even six valuable items, he emphasizes, just ones with the words "Barcelona 1992" on them. (A married man, Erwin declined the offer.)

It starts out so innocently: a free offer on a Coke can, a gift from a friend. But as they discover, only the first one is free.

Often, pins can be gateway items, leading to harder stuff. Collectors might trade bunches of ordinary pins for a few rare ones, then parlay those into such prizes as torches or athletes' participation medals. And then the big payoff can come: bronze, silver and even gold medals.

"I have an Atlanta gold medal," says Scott Reed of Georgia. He obtained the item "from a fellow collector who got it from a female Russian cyclist. I don't know why she gave it up, but there are medals available."

In non-Olympic years, pin traders



can fall on hard times.

"Prices go up (around) the Games, then maybe 95 percent of collectors will say, 'Enough is enough,'" says Utah's Fleming. "They'll frame them and forget about it until the next Olympics. Right now, the market is deader than a doornail. I've got pins on eBay that retail for \$7 selling for \$4.95. It's flat; it's unlike any other Olympics."

Fleming blames this lull before the

upcoming Athens Games in part on what he calls the Greeks' "negative spin on the pins that are produced in the U.S.A. The hype is that they're not authentic, not licensed, which is not true. It may get ugly for those U.S. collectors who are going to travel to Greece in an effort to sell or trade pins."

The situation is similar to one that bedeviled collectors in Barcelona in 1992. Strict enforcement of laws pro-

hibiting selling by unlicensed vendors drove pinheads into dark alleys.

"We were doing business in doorways," says Los Angeles collector Bob Bravender, Papazian and Erwin, a member of the New York-based Olympin Club. "You feel like a criminal. It was crazy."

Atlanta's Reed shrugs off any suggestion of acrimony toward the Greeks. "My opinion is that Athens pins will be very sought after because a lot of people who normally go seem to be staying home, whether it's because of terrorism or infrastructure."

There are no reliable price guides available, so the hobby is coldly ruled by supply and demand. It's hard to guess what the hot buy will be.

"It's like the stock market," says Fleming. "You have to be extremely lucky. If you're in it for the money, forget about it."

A quick survey of trading and selling sites showed that the most common items were in the \$5 to \$10 range. Media pins tend to fetch the highest prices of those easily available online. For instance, the bland-looking Associated Press pins for Seoul 1988 sell on one popular site for top dollar (\$35), whereas the charming tiger mascot/soccer event pin is only \$6.99.

But the real money is in the ultra-scarce "country" pins. These National Olympic Committee pins are worn by the athletes themselves and often are released into the wild after being traded with other Olympians. For instance, pin manufacturer Trofe's 1988 Art Deco pins for the African nation of Gabon might command \$300 to \$400—if you could even find one for sale. Country pins such as Britain's from the 1936 Berlin Games might run as high as \$1,000.

Woodstock lingers 35 years after show

BETHEL, N.Y. (AP)—Families in SUVs drive up to the grassy hill all summer. Dads snap pictures at the memorial plaque. Young couples look at the lush expanse and try to imagine the chaotic scene.

This is not some old battlefield, but the former hay field where the Woodstock concert helped define a generation 35 years ago, Aug. 15-17, 1969.

The steady dribble of nostalgic baby boomers and curious Gen-Xers visiting this remote field shows how Woodstock still reverberates in the popular imagination. Even as the hippies of Woodstock become eligible for AARP cards, the concert remains a symbol to many of the transcendent power of music. From Live-Aid to Lollapalooza, no concert has mustered the same cultural cachet.

"What happened here will never happen again," said Jakub Muller, a Czech who visited the site last week during an extended stateside stay. Muller was born four years after the concert and an ocean away, but he made a point of standing on the exact spot of the Woodstock stage.

"I wanted to be where it was, you know? Step on the stones."

The Woodstock story is known all over: rock promoters fail to land the arts colony of Woodstock, N.Y., for a festival site and settle on a dairy farm

some 50 miles southwest in Bethel. Despite the site switch, some 400,000 people show up—many as gatecrashers—to listen to the Who and Jimi Hendrix during a long weekend of rain, mud and blissed out anarchy.

By the time it was over, Woodstock became a sort of shorthand for hedonism, anti-war sentiment and youth culture. It still is. The word has become synonymous with the '60s and terms like "Woodstock era" and "Woodstock generation" still pop up in newspapers and magazines hundreds of times a year.

Woodstock performer Country Joe McDonald said the concert remains all the more meaningful because 2004, like 1969, is a time colored by a controversial war and civil unrest. He said young people who "want to be part of the Woodstock dream" still ask him about the concert.

"It is exactly as relevant today as it was in 1969," McDonald said. "Historically, politically and socially, the battle is still being waged."

Author and journalism professor William McKeen, who teaches a rock history course at the University of Florida, said his young students not only listen to Woodstock era music, but remain keenly interested in learning about a concert that encapsulated the spirit of the times.

Could it happen again?

Some people doubt it could in a time when concert tickets can cost more than a DVD player and corporations have taken tighter control of the industry. The image of unchecked hordes trampling into a concert can seem quaint in a time when some promoters use metal detectors.

"I don't think you see that kind of Bacchanalian orgy thing going on anymore at rock concerts," McKeen said. "Maybe people have gotten too conservative over the years."

And while Woodstock featured bands that played blues, funk and folk, successful festivals of recent years tend to cater to niches in a more balkanized pop landscape. Bonnaroo features jam bands, Ozzfest is heavy metal, Summer Jam is hip-hop and the Warped Tour attracts punk fans.

A few concerts have compared to Woodstock in terms of their ambitions. The trans-Atlantic Live-Aid concert of 1985 enlisted top acts like David Bowie and Madonna for the cause of fighting starvation in Africa. The initial Lollapalooza concerts were credited with mirroring youth culture of the '90s (although this year's version was canceled because of poor ticket sales). But few people would refer to the "Live-Aid generation" or the "Lollapalooza spirit."



A monument to the Woodstock festival sits on the edge of the natural bowl as storm clouds roll in on Friday, Aug. 6, 2004, at Bethel, N.Y., where the world famous festival was held 35 years ago.



Teen wants social worker to accentuate the positive

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: I am 16 years old and a ward of the court. I have a horrible social worker who never looks at any of the positive things I do. I have good grades and barely ever do anything wrong. Recently I have been doing things that they call "acting out." I am not acting out!

At our last court appearance, her report stated that I'm a juvenile delinquent who is in need of serious help. I am consistently told by the people at the group home where I live that I am none of those things.

How do I tell my social worker that she needs to see the positive things I am doing and not just look at the negative? Please help me. I am going nuts. I need to know if it is me or her.

CONFUSED
IN REDWOOD CITY, CALIF.

DEAR CONFUSED: It's possible that the problem isn't all yours or all hers, but a combination of both. The caseload social workers must manage these days is overwhelming, which means that, much as they might wish otherwise, they are often unable to give each client a lot of personal attention.

"Acting out" is misbehaving and expressing angry feelings in inappropriate ways. When a child is separated from home, school, family and friends, that's a good reason to be angry. However, if you and the people at your group home feel that the social worker is mistaken, then the administrator should write a letter to the court explaining that fact. I'm sure the judge would take it into consideration. (I know I would.)

P.S. If the social worker thinks you need "serious help"—which I assume to mean psychological counseling—go for it. Almost everyone can benefit from having a trained person listen to his or her concerns, pains and problems. It is considered to be a huge benefit, not a punishment.



DEAR ABBY: What is the rule of etiquette concerning guest lists that include both friends and co-workers? Does one have to invite all co-workers to a private/personal function, or can a select handful of co-workers be invited?

NEEDS ADVICE,
LATHAM, N.Y.

DEAR NEEDS ADVICE: Much depends upon the size of your office, how many co-workers you plan to ask, and what percentage will be excluded. If you invite only a few co-workers, it's important that you not offend the rest. This can be accomplished by keeping the invitation private, separate from work, and confidential. However, if you plan to invite the majority and exclude only a few, there are bound to be hurt feelings and you could create unnecessary tensions, so I advise against it.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS, and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)



Dear Abby

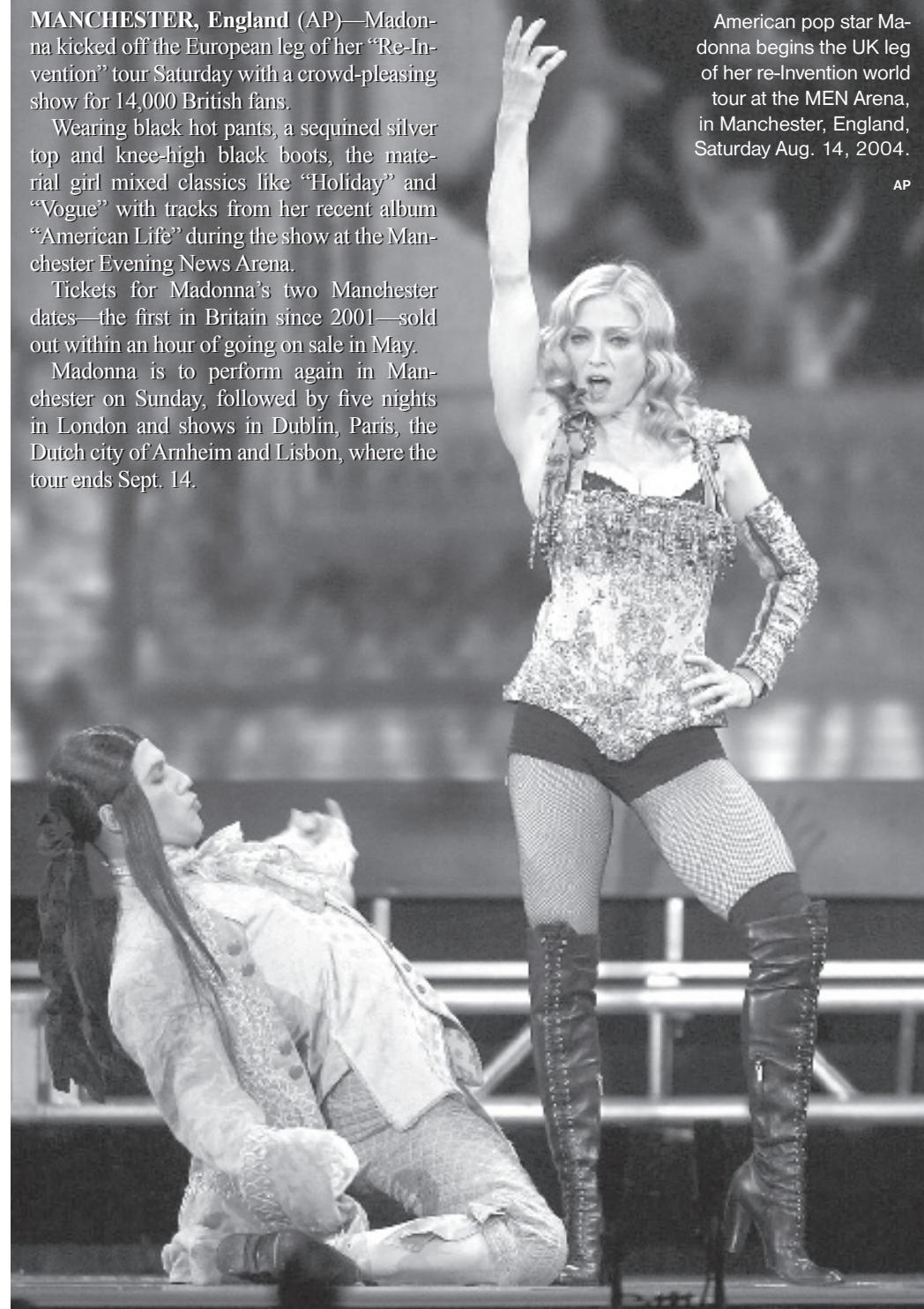
Madonna opens European tour in Britain

MANCHESTER, England (AP)—Madonna kicked off the European leg of her "Re-Invention" tour Saturday with a crowd-pleasing show for 14,000 British fans.

Wearing black hot pants, a sequined silver top and knee-high black boots, the material girl mixed classics like "Holiday" and "Vogue" with tracks from her recent album "American Life" during the show at the Manchester Evening News Arena.

Tickets for Madonna's two Manchester dates—the first in Britain since 2001—sold out within an hour of going on sale in May.

Madonna is to perform again in Manchester on Sunday, followed by five nights in London and shows in Dublin, Paris, the Dutch city of Arnhem and Lisbon, where the tour ends Sept. 14.



American pop star Madonna begins the UK leg of her re-Invention world tour at the MEN Arena, in Manchester, England, Saturday Aug. 14, 2004.

AP

'Apprentice' winner gets second job

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Bill Rancic, who won a job with Donald Trump on "The Apprentice," will moonlight as a spokesman for a credit card company.

Rancic will represent Advanta—a Spring House-based credit card company that caters to small businesses—in public appearances, media interviews and promotional campaigns.

"Bill has a particular resonance" with an age group that is getting into small business, Advanta chairman Dennis Alter said Thursday.

Rancic, an Advanta cardholder, is working for Trump as an "owner's representative" in the development of the 90-story Trump International Hotel & Tower in Chicago.

"I am in for the long run," he said. "My goal is to be in deals with Donald Trump rather than doing them for him."

Rolling Stones drummer Watts treated for cancer

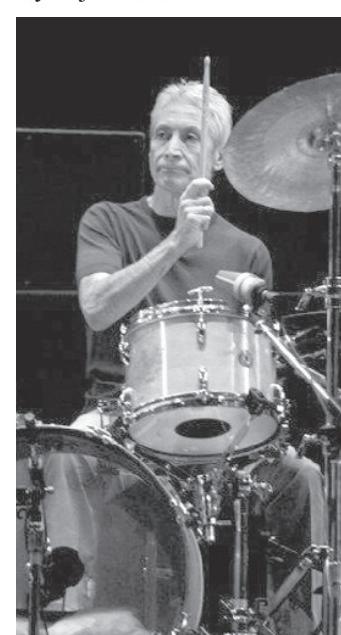
LONDON (AP)—Rolling Stones drummer Charlie Watts is being treated for throat cancer, a spokesman for the band said Saturday.

Watts, 63, was diagnosed in June and has completed four weeks of a six-week course of radiotherapy at London's Royal Marsden Hospital.

"He is expecting to make a full recovery and start work with the rest of the band later in the year," the spokesman said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

He said Watt's treatment had not interfered with any tour or recording plans for the Stones, who have been "relaxing between work commitments" following a world tour last year.

Known as the most laid-back member of the band he joined more than 40 years ago, Watts has also performed with a variety of jazz ensembles.



AP

Rolling Stones drummer, and original band member Charlie Watts performs during the opening night of the Stones U.S. tour in Boston, Mass. in this Sept. 3, 2002 file photo.

Crowds say goodbye to singer Rick James

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP)—Grammy Award-winning funk singer Rick James was laid to rest Saturday in his hometown, where 6,000 people waited for hours to pay their final respects.

The line of mourners stretched more than two city blocks for the funeral service. Seventy gospel singers and a band performed a lively tribute.

"This Buffalo project boy was like a phoenix rising from ashes to the pinnacle of America's musical world," said his cousin, former Ohio congressman Louis Stokes. He attended the funeral, along with the singer's three children, aunt, uncle, other cousins and friends.

The singer died in his sleep last week at his home near Universal City, Calif. James, whose real name was James Johnson Jr., was 56. He was to be cremated after the service, funeral director Vincent Amigone said.

An autopsy has failed to determine what caused the singer's death. Results of a toxicology test were pending. James, who suffered a stroke in 1998, was a diabetic and had a pacemaker.

James never failed to publicly praise his late mother, Mabel Sims Gladden, said Stokes, who described a mutual devotion between the hardworking mother and son.

"He took us all with him on a

roller coaster ride," said Stokes, whose brother, Carl Stokes, was elected the first black mayor of a major city, Cleveland, in 1967. "Rick James became our family's first superstar."

James' 1981 hit "Super Freak" earned him a Grammy for best R&B song nearly a decade later, after rapper MC Hammer, who shared the Grammy, used it in his "U Can't Touch This."

"He was without a doubt a musical genius," said longtime friend Aaron Dublin, who worked with James until 1983. "He changed the game of music. There was never anybody like him before and there's never been anybody like him since."

Bjork, Dutch DJ help ring in Olympics

ATHENS, Greece (AP)—A tiny Icelandic singer wearing an ocean of a dress and a Dutch DJ with music flowing from his fingertips helped bring the 2004 Olympic Games to a wet and wild start. Bjork performed her song "Oceania" during Friday's opening ceremony in keeping with the evening's water theme.

"You have done good for yourselves since you left my

wet embrace and crawled ashore," the lyrics went—and so went the waves of fabric intended to look like an extension of the thick twists of ice blue that composed Bjork's gown. The shimmering material unfurled from her feet and spread over the heads of many of the thousands of athletes who'd filed into the Olympic Stadium infield.

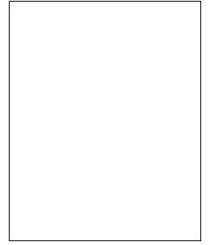
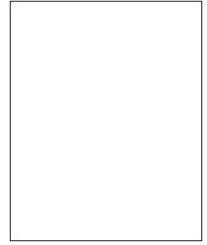
Bjork herself shimmered as

well, with bluish-purple glittery eye shadow across her lids. Her dark hair dangled in tiny twists that framed her pixieish, freckled face.

Earlier in the evening, the disc jockey Tiësto from Amsterdam played about two hours of non-stop dance music as the world's athletes took their first steps onto the world's biggest stage. It was the first time a DJ has had such a role at the games.

Pastimes





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